Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/livesofmostemine0002revc

LIVES

OF THE MOST EMINENT

Painters, Sculptors, and Architects

OF

THE ORDER OF S. DOMINIC.

F.R. BARTOLOMMEO

Forster Lith. Dublin.

LIVES

OF

THE MOST EMINENT

Painters, Sculptors & Architects

OF

THE ORDER OF S. DOMINIC.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF

Father Marchese of the same Institute.

WITH NOTES, ETC.,

BY THE REV. C. P. MEEHAN.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

DUBLIN:
JAMES DUFFY, 7, WELLINGTON QUAY.
1852.

DUBLIN:
PRINTED BY J. M. O'TOOLE,
13, HAWKINS'-STREET.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

Page

Fra Bartolommeo della Porta, ... 1

CHAPTER II.

Origin, Country, and Studies of Fra Bartolommeo della Porta—Vicissitudes of his Youth—The Paintings of this first Epoch, . 10

CHAPTER III.

Fra Bartolommeo, at the instance of the Religious and his Friends, resumes his Pencil—He appoints Mariotto Albertinelli his Brother's Guardian—He studies and imitates Lionardo da Vinci—His intimacy with Raffaello da Urbino—Works executed under the influence of these two celebrated Masters—The Beauties of this Second Period of the Artistic Career of Fra Bartolommeo della Porta, ... 28

CHAPTER IV.

Fra Bartolommeo goes to Venice—The Paintings he undertook to execute in that city—His return to Florence—Artistic partnership with Mariotto Albertinelli—Its dissolution, . . 48

Rec. 4821 ST

CHAPTER V.

Page

Fra Bartolommeo della Porta adheres still more closely to the method of the Venetians—Perfections and Imperfections of this new manner—Paintings that belong to it, . . . 69

CHAPTER VI.

Fra Bartolommeo in Rome—Who was Fra Mariano Fetti, for whom this painter executed two large pictures—He begins to follow Michelangiolo Buonarroti—He returns to Florence—Paintings in this fourth and last manner, ... 81

CHAPTER VII.

Fra Bartolommeo goes to Lucca, Pistoja and Prato—Paintings which he executed in these cities—Returns to Florence at the time of the visit of Leo X.—His health failing, he is obliged to go again to Pian di Mugnone and Lecceto. 99

CHAPTER VIII.

Last Paintings of Fra Bartolommeo—His Death and Eulogy—His Designs and his Pupils, ... 120

Summary of the Paintings by Fra Bartolommeo della Porta, taken from an ancient M.S. in the Archives of San Marco, Florence, entitled Registry (B.), commencing 1493, and terminating in 1516, ... 135

Paintings which were sold, ... 136

Paintings by which he earned no money, . . . 138

CHAPTER IX.

Fra Giovanni Giocondo, of Verona, Architect, Engineer, and Antiquarian, ... 141

CHAPTER X.

Page

Fra Marco Pensaben and Fra Marco Maraveja, Venetian Painters—Examination and Confutation of Federici's opinion regarding the first of these Artists, ... 169

CHAPTER XI.

Fra Guglielmo Marcillat, a celebrated Painter on Glass, Architect and Painter—His works in Rome, in Cortona, in Arezzo, and in Perugia, ... 180

CHAPTER XII.

Fra Paolino da Pistoja, disciple of Fra Bartolommeo della Porta, . 196

CHAPTER XIII.

Fra Damiano da Bergamo, the celebrated Intarsiator—His works in his own country, in Bologna, and elsewhere—His disciples, . 214

CHAPTER XIV.

Of some minor Artists of the Sixteenth Century, . . 239

CHAPTER XV.

Sister Plautilla Nelli, the Dominican Paintress, and other Nuns of the same Institute, who cultivated Painting, Miniature, and the Plastic Art, in Florence, Prato, and Lucca, . . 247

CHAPTER XVI.

Father Ignatius Danti, Mathematician, Cosmographer, Engineer, and Architect, ... 260

CHAPTER XVII.

Father Domenico Portigiani, a most skilful Caster in Bronze, and Architect, ... 282

CHAPTER XVIII.

Page

Father Domenico Paganelli of Faenza, Architect and Civil Engineer, 296

CHAPTER XIX.

Father Giovanni Battista Mayno, the Spanish Painter, and Father Jean Andrè, a French Painter, . . . 306

CHAPTER XX.

Father Vincenzo Maculano, Cardinal of Holy Church; and some other Architects, and Civil and Military Engineers, . . 314

CHAPTER XXI.

Origin of the present Memoirs; and Epilogue, . . 330

Illustrations of some Paintings in the Imperial and Royal Gallery of the Florentine Academy:

The Baptism of Jesus Christ, a Painting on Panel, by Giotto da Bondone da Vespignano, ... 336

Legend of S. Humility, a Picture on Panel, by Buonamico Buffalmacco, ... 339

Legend of S. Humility, a Picture on Panel, by Buonamico Buffalmacco, ... 341

Of some Paintings, by Fra Giovanni Angelico del Mugello, which decorate a Deposition from the Cross, . . . 344

S. Barbera, a Painting on Panel, by Cosimo Rosselli, . . 348

Documents to Illustrate the Memoirs of the Dominican Artists, . 351

MEMOIRS

OF THE MOST

Eminent Painters, Sculptors, & Architects,

OF THE

ORDER OF ST. DOMINIC.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

FRA BARTOLOMMEO DELLA PORTA.

INTRODUCTION.

THE failure of Savonarola's attempted Reform, with which we closed the first volume of these Memoirs, soon produced its fruits. For when the ambition of Lodovico, (called il Moro,)[1] had opened a high road for the stranger to march into the fair Land "enclosed by the Alps and sea," Italy, instead of finding her children banded together for her defence, beheld them drawing their parricidal swords to stab her to the heart. Then, indeed, this hapless soil, conquered without the dignity of a patriotic struggle, was overrun and harried by mercenary hordes; and turned into a tourney-field, where Spaniard, Teuton, and Frenchman jousted for every acre of the peninsula. Thus, the very men on whom

[1] Ludovico Sforza, in the year 1493, induced Charles VIII. of France to march into Italy in order to expel King Ferdinand from Naples. Pope Alexander VI. was the ally of Ludovico.

the Italians had recently bestowed a new world, were now actually disputing with them the possession of their own territory! We had lost the empire of arms, and nothing now remained for us save the empire of intellect. When Julius II., that man of wonderful conceptions, found himself unable to drive the barbarians out of Italy, he resolved that the land of his birth should maintain the primacy in letters, arts, and religion; a primacy that neither ambition nor foreign despotism shall ever wrest from us, till they shall have deprived us of the air we breathe and the soil upon which we live. But when death prevented Julius II. from realizing his grand designs, Leo X., whose heart glowed with the love of Italy, set about incarnating the grand idea of his predecessor. Then came Bembo and Sadoleto to occupy distinguised places near the person of the new Pontiff. The youthful Beroaldo was appointed librarian of the Vatican, and Filippo Laschari was charged to instruct the rising generation in Greek and Latin literature. Paolo Giovio, Aldo Manuzio, Tebaldeo, Bernardo Accolti, Santi Pagnini, Agostino Giustiniani, and a long train of poets and learned men shone like brilliant stars around the Pontiff's throne; and all knowledge, human and divine, might be said to have taken up its abode within the halls of the Vatican. Then, as well as at all former periods, the theatre was regarded as an essential element of refinement, and Giorgio Trissino with his Sofonisba, and Cardinal Bibbiena with the Calandra,[1] laid the foundations, the former, of tragedy, and the latter, of Italian comedy. Meanwhile Raffaello, assisted by Giulio Romano, Francesco Penni, Perin del Vaga, Baldassare Peruzzi, and Giovanni da Udine, was paint

[1] This comedy was performed in the Vatican, in presence of Pope Leo X.

ing the chambers of the Vatican. Michelangelo, after creating the Mosè, was painting the Sybils in the Sixtine, and furnishing designs to Sebastian del Piombo, in order to eclipse his rival Raffael; whilst Fra Giocondo, Giuliano di San Gallo and Raffael succeeded Bramante, (recently deceased,) in erecting the most magnificent temple in the universe.[1]

But if we turn our eyes from "almighty Rome," and look to the other provinces of Italy, we will everywhere find the majestic triumph of arts and letters. In the halls of Este we may behold Ariosto reading for Cardinal Ippolito the loves and follies of Orlando; Castiglione amusing the court of Urbino with his Cortegiano; Florence, the modern Athens, learning lessons of policy, arms, and literature from Guicciardini, Macchiavelli, and Alamanni in the Rucellai gardens; Milan gazing with astonishment on Lionardo's "Last Supper;" Bologna enriching herself with the last and most perfect of Francia's tintings; Parma saluting the rising glory of young Coreggio; and Venice proudly pointing to the creations of Tiziano and Giorgione. Thus, at the very moment when an ambitious and audacious Friar was filling all Germany with disorder and confusion; when men, women, and children were discussing scholastic subtleties and time-honoured dogmata in the piazzas and on the high roads, the imitative arts had reached their climax in Italy; an epic poem had been created; tragedy and comedy revived; the elegance and truthfulness of Thucidides, Livy, and Tacitus, if not surpassed, most certainly rivalled; whilst philosophy and the science of the divinity venerated Truth, despite the deliriums, atrocities, and direful confusion that pervaded all society. It was thus that

1 V. Roscoe's Leo X.

God, in his pity, corrected the disorders of the times; and if we were no longer able to give laws to subjugated peoples, we were, nevertheless, their masters in civilization. Behold the Emperor Charles V. and King Francis I. bowing before the marvellous genius of Lionardo and Titian, and ask yourself does the history of any other country reveal such a splendid proof of intellectual supremacy!

But that we may not stray from the subject of these Memoirs, we will say a few words concerning the condition of the fine arts in that portentous sixteenth century. When we undertook to write the life of Fra Giovanni Angelico, and to develope the canons of Christian art, our labour was light; for, indeed, all the painters of the fourteenth, and the greater part of those who flourished in the fifteenth century, appeared to us to be wonderfully concordant, and, as it were, speaking the same language. Go where you will, from one extremity of Italy to the other, and you will everywhere find them evidencing the same simplicity, grace, and inspiration. In fact, they do not seem to belong to many and various schools of painting, but to one family, educated on the same principle, reared in the same way, and aspiring to a common glory. Transport Avanzi and Dalmasio to Siena; Matteo di Giovanni to Bologna; Simone Memmi to Rome; Pietro Cavallini to Florence; and they all will appear to have been denizens of the same cities, educated in the same schools, while the same may be predicated of Francesco Francia and of Pietro Perugino, who are like streamlets from the same fountain source. Religion set the impress of celestial beauty on them all, and thus made them brothers.

But, undertaking to write of the life and works of the illustrious painter, Fra Bartolommeo della Porta, and

desiring to develope the general canons of art in the sixteenth century, we feel ourselves almost constrained to abandon the attempt, and to confess our inability. For not only do the Italian schools of this period appear to us various and discordant, but we very often find the same painter pursuing a multiplicity and a variety of methods, so much so, that not being accustomed to them, and withal desirous to judge of them, we have every reason to dread falling into error. Some of them we find expending all their powers on colouring, using it like an instrument from which they drew sweetest melodies; others enriching design, and fruitful of beauteous forms whose varied lines and graceful attitudes fascinate the eye; some, on the other hand, not so famous as colourists, nor so prompt as designers, achieving wonders in composition; and if you would contemplate the multitudes they have depicted enjoying the calmness of peace, or equipped for deeds of arms—moving in the mazes of the dance or marching in triumphant procession, they almost persuade us that instead of painters, they were historians and poets. Nevertheless, though the greater part of them imitated the *True*, their works very rarely excite a single generous sentiment in our souls, and still more rarely a devout thought of heaven. Hence we may conclude that art, in the sixteenth century, either had not certain and defined laws, or was moderated by such as these:—*The office of the fine arts is to seek what is pleasing; they are essentially imitative; all their value consists in the truth and power of imitation, and in the delight which men experience by reason of this grateful illusion. Provided this effect be attained, it matters not whether the objects imitated be of themselves pleasing or magnificent.*"[1] Thus art, which

[1] Pietro Giordani. Opere. vol. ii., p. 12. Edizione del 1821.

Christianity had employed to diffuse civilization and to educate the people—art which the Church cultivated as the noble language of pure and holy affections was, during this sixteenth century, generally speaking, made ancillary to the tastes of the unreflecting, and the prave passions of the worldly great.

Descending from these general considerations to others which may be described as partial and peculiar to Religious art, and in order to define the boundaries that divide the painters of the sixteenth century, from these of the preceding ages, we will observe that they differ from each other in three grand principles: in composition, in decorum, and in imitation.

The ancients very wisely divided the various paintings intended for the adornments of God's temple, into two distinct classes; to the first belonged these pictures, whether on canvas, panel, or in fresco, to which the temple itself, or altar, was dedicated, and which were painted to excite the veneration of the faithful. These were so conceived, that the figure of the Saint, isolated or otherwise, should present itself to the eyes of the worshipper, crowned with the glory of the elect, since no mortal man could be esteemed worthy of such solemn homage. If these paintings were on panel, they had the form of dyptichs or tryptichs; and the accessory figures were usually depicted in minor dimensions, so as not to distract either homage or admiration from the principal object. To the second class belonged such paintings as were solely meant for the decoration of the temple, cloisters, or chapter-rooms, and they were called HISTORIES; and these, according to the circumstances of the times and history, represented some fact strictly in accordance with the truth. The sixteenth century over-ruled and depreciated this order, so wisely laid down by

our fathers; and in some altar-pieces you will often discover more confusion than would be tolerated in a history describing a land or sea fight. Mid such a multitude of accessories—footmen, and horsemen—it is almost impossible to discover the Saint, who is the object of religious veneration, since the painter either pourtrays him in a feeble light, or expends himself on irrelevant adjuncts. Add to all this the beauty of landscape, the majesty of great buildings, the exquisite elaboration of embroideries, and a hundred other accessories, all of which are calculated to distract the attention, and to prevent the soul from elevating itself to the contemplation of celestial and everlasting glories.

But singularly remarkable is the difference between the ancient painters and those of this century, in all that regards decorum and decency. Scarcely had that impure sect of artists whom Savonarola denounced, drunk his blood and scattered his ashes, when they began to contaminate, not only the domestic walls, but the very temples of the Eternal, with their infamous turpitudes. Having either removed or destroyed these chaste productions, the works and testimonies of the faith of our forefathers, they substituted them by indecent pictures and indecent statues, calculated to extinguish every spark, not only of religion, but of modesty. Whosoever would investigate the causes of this profanity, will find them in the corruption of this age, in the loss of faith occasioned by the schism in the West, and in the excessive study of the Mythology. It was utterly impossible that the painter or the sculptor, who had devoted his genius to pourtraying the iniquities of the pagan Olympus, could approach the holy subjects furnished by the Christian religion with a pure fantasy, and he must have failed to raise himself to high and holy concep-

tions. The vitiated tastes of artists have occasioned serious evils to religion and to morality in Italy; nor will I trust myself to describe them, lest I forget myself in my indignation.[1] Let me rather congratulate the modern artists who have rid us of such nauseating subjects, consigning to the haunts of infamy these revolting nudities, to which no honest citizen would give a place within the sacred precincts of the temple, nay, nor within his domestic walls.

It now remains for us to speak of the third and last difference which exists between these two epochs of Italian painting, I mean of imitation. Throughout the fourteenth century, art may be said to have been traditional. In the fifteenth it took the True for its only model, or, as some would say, raised it to the ideal. Many painters of the sixteenth century introduced a superstitious imitation of the Greek and Roman statues, in which they fancied they had discovered the most perfect design and the most exquisite forms; as though the Greek and Roman sculptors, in order to arrive at this excellence, had not been obliged to study nature and truth. Hence, they did not perceive that marble very

[1] Gaye, Carteggio Ined. quotes a MS. (by an anonymous of the sixteenth century) now in the Magliabechi Library, from which we make the following extract: "March 19, 1549. They uncovered the foul figures (in S. Maria del Fiore,) by Baccio Bandinelli. These were Adam and Eve, a fact that scandalized the whole city, which was indignant that the Duke would allow such things to be placed in the cathedral before the altar of the most Holy Sacrament. In the same year was uncovered (in Santo Spirito) a Pietà which a Florentine sent to said church. This was saved from destruction simply because the original was the invention of Buonarotti. Modern painters and sculptors, now-a-days, produce no figures on canvas or marble, except such as are calculated to destroy faith and devotion; but I hope that God will one day send a saint to overthrow such idolatries." The two statues of Adam and Eve were removed from the cathedral A.D. 1722, and are at present in the Palazzo Vecchio.

rarely has expression and life. And if the peculiarity of the material on which the sculptor has to work, and the absence of colouring, cause us to expect little more from him than design and expression; in the painter, on the other hand, we have a right to seek the most marked resemblance to truth, together with a correcter portraiture of the body, nay, and of the soul and its passions. This imitation of the ancients was, at this period, very frequently followed beyond all boundaries of reason; for, fancying that a picture was perfect only when it faithfully copied the Greek forms, they at length began to transport an entire statue to the canvas, so much so, that some of the artists of this age metamorphosed Olympic Jove into the Eternal Father, the Medicean Venus into Magdalene; whilst they copied the Adonis and Paris to represent S. John the Evangelist, and the Farnesian Hercules to personate an Apostle and Martyr alternately. In the presence of such works, I know not whether to call them statues or paintings, reader, would a solitary tear trickle from thine eye, or thy heart throb with a single religious affection?

These, if I do not err, are the principal points of difference between the two schools; and we have thought it advisable to premise them, since Fra Bartolommeo, whose life we are about to write, belongs to the fifteenth and sixteenth century, and forms the connecting link between these two epochs. It was necessary, moreover, to throw some light on the conceptions and maxims by which the Italian artists of the period were governed. And as Fra Bartolommeo belonged to the Roman, Venetian, and Lombard school, we have employed all diligence to investigate the character of the times and works that felt the influence of Lionardo, Raffael, Titian, and Michelangelo, dividing his life and paintings into

four periods, during which Fra Bartolommeo gradually abandoned the ancient, and at length classed himself amongst the modern, painters. This transition, hitherto unnoticed, has caused us long and laborious study, which, however, we trust may prove beneficial to the history of our arts. Let us finally advert that, as we write this life out of original and unpublished documents in the archives of S. Marco, (Florence,) we will not follow Vasari and Baldinucci in the chronological order which they both have strangely confused.[1]

CHAPTER II.

Origin, Country, and Studies of Fra Bartolommeo della Porta—Vicissitudes of his Youth—The Paintings of this first Epoch.

In Savignano, or, as others call it, Savigliano, a small village six miles from Prato and ten from Florence,[2] lived a certain Paul, commonly called the "Agent," a sobriquet which he inherited from his father, Giacomo. I believe the people bestowed this epithet on him, because he was always disposed to give as much assistance as possible to his neighbours in the management of their affairs; be that as it may, the sobriquet became the dis-

[1] This remark applies solely to the Chronology, for we admit Vasari's accuracy as to facts; and, indeed, he might easily have learned all the particulars of Fra Bartolommeo's life from Fra Eustachio, the miniaturist of San Marco, who was the contemporary of Fra Bortolommeo. V. vol. i. c. xiii. of these Memoirs.

[2] Fra Bartolommeo always subscribes himself, "Pictor Florentinus," and is so called in the Annals of San Marco, because, perhaps, he had passed the greater part of his life in Florence.

tinctive title of all his descendants.[1] Paul, in all probability, followed the father's calling; and being a frugal and well-conducted man, he soon contrived to purchase a few fields in Val d' Elsa, and in San Donato in Poggio, together with a house in Florence, and began to live much more comfortably than his father. It is likely, however, that he did not leave the natal village, where the bones of his kindred were mouldering, till he was far advanced in years. Having married a woman of his own condition, he had of her two sons: the eldest, who was born A.D. 1469, he called Bartolommeo, or, as the Tuscans vulgarly pronounce it, Baccio; and to the second, who was born a few years afterwards, he gave the name of Peter. The little Baccio grew up beneath the good parents' care, a pious and discreet youth, enjoying that golden mediocrity of fortune which is equidistant from want and opulence. When his childhood had sped by, Paul, finding his child to be of a most intelligent disposition, began to consider to what profession he should devote him; and, as we may easily suppose that he had already given proof of his love for the fine arts, in which he afterwards became so distinguished, he resolved to bring him to Florence to study painting, and to lodge him with some of his kinsfolk, who inhabited the house he had purchased near the *gate* of San Pier Gattolini. On this account, instead of Baccio del Fattorino, every one began to call him Baccio della Porta. On his arrival in Florence, Paul brought Baccio to Benedetto da Majano, a renowned sculptor and architect, who advised him to send the youth to the studio of Cosimo Rosselli.[2]

[1] Of this sobriquet, unknown to all historians, we find mention in an original contract that we will give amongst the Documents. (V. No. 1.) His surname is unknown.

[2] Vasari, Vita di Fra Bartolommeo di San Marco.

It may be questioned whether Benedetto da Majano acted the part of a true friend, when he suggested to Paul to select out of all the Florentine painters, the man who was the least distinguished for genius and art; and surely he could not have made choice of any master who was more remarkable for poverty of design.[1] If Baccio had been sent to study under Domenico del Ghirlandajo, instead of Cosimo Rosselli, he should have had a master in every respect superior to the latter, in design, colouring, and composition, and he would also have been the condisciple of that Michelangiolo Buonarotti, who was destined to reflect so much glory on the three sister arts.

When Porta began to study under Cosimo Rosselli, the latter, just returned from Rome, was advanced in years, and obliged to be assisted in his works by his pupil, Piero di Cosimo, and the young Mariotto Albertinelli. Let the reader now fancy what was poor Baccio's condition. The old master, abandoning brush and palette, spent most of his time with a select circle of gossips at the furnace, making experiments in alchemy; and Piero di Cosimo, rude in his manner, and grossly irregular in his life, was by no means fitted to impart instruction to the young Savignanese. The same may be said of Mariotto Albertinelli, then twenty years of age, whose conduct was that of an avowed libertine. Thus was the simple and ingenuous Porta, who had been brought up in the exercise of every virtue, left to himself in a most corrupt city, without a master who was suited to advance him in his art, or companions whose example was calculated to guide and stimulate him in the pursuit of virtue. Although now arrived at

[1] Vasari, Vita di Cosimo Rosselli.

the period of life when one feels the necessity of loving and being beloved, he had no sympathies in common either with Cosimo or Piero, whose pursuits were so widely different from his own, and he therefore resolved to emulate Albertinelli in the study of art. The work of the day over, Mariotto betook himself to the wine shops, and Baccio to the churches, whilst Piero hunted game in the fields, and Cosimo spent his evenings dreaming of the philosopher's stone! Thus did Porta, in the years of illusions, sentiment, and enthusiasm, keep his soul unblemished and his heart uncorrupted, though living in an atmosphere of vice. Sooner than associate with the idle and dissipated, he devoted himself to study, to reading, to retirement, and prayer. His recreation was to sit and listen to those who were esteemed as wise and prudent; and he resorted to the cloisters and churches to hear eloquent orators developing the great Evangelical dogmata. In a word, in other times and under other masters, Baccio would have revived the examples of the Blessed Giovanni in virtue as well as in art.

Meanwhile, it every day became apparent that the precepts of Cosimo did not tend to advance him in the art of painting; for he was not only feeble in design, crude in colouring, and miserably defective in composition, but his figures were so ignoble that, with the exception of Andrea del Castagno, there never was another artist so insensible to the beautiful in nature.[1] Baccio and Mariotto therefore determined to leave Rosselli's school, and to apply themselves to study in the house of

[1] In my opinion there is only one work by this master which raises him above mediocrity. It is a fresco in the church of S. Ambrose, Florence, representing the miracle of the most holy Sacrament; in which there is a very fine group of beautiful females. At the end of this volume we will give an illustration of a work of his now in the Gallery of the Academy of Design.

the former, near the gate of San Pietro Gattolini, taking the ancient masters, and particularly Masaccio, for their models; and as Baccio was fascinated by the shading and colouring of Lionardo da Vinci, he began to study his works, making, in a short time, such rapid progress in outline, shading, the management of light and colouring, that he won the reputation of being one of the most talented of the youths who were then cultivating art. At this period painting had been placed under the tutelage of sculpture and goldsmith's work, and, indeed, there were then very few amongst the Florentine painters who had not studied the rudiments of sculpture and of the goldsmith's art. This may be predicated of Lionardo da Vinci, Sandro Botticelli, Lorenzo di Credi, Andrea del Sarto, and others; some of whom likewise studied architecture, sculpture, casting in bronze, *Niello*, and painting: a sad reflection on our age, in which it rarely happens that an artist finds himself equal to more than one art.

Lorenzo the Magnificent, had expended enormous sums in purchasing objects of the fine arts, which were beautifully disposed in his garden, on the Piazza di San Marco, so that the loggie were filled with choicest sculptures, as were the alleys and chambers; nor had he failed to collect paintings by the best masters of Italy, and other countries. Independently of being an ornament to the place, they were a school and academy for young painters, sculptors, and all persons practising the various branches of design. Bertoldo, the Florentine sculptor, an aged and experienced master, who had studied under Donatello, was the custodian of the grand objects in this garden.[1] Here he gave lessons to all the

[1] Amongst those who studied painting and sculpture in this garden were

youthful cultivators of art. Here all the Florentine artists were wont to assemble. Lorenzo the Magnificent, encouraged them by his promises and honours: the glorious genius of young Buonarotti stimulated the most enthusiastic rivalry. The lofty strains of the poets who looked on all the imaginative arts as springing from one common source, hymned the praises of the artist's splendid creations. Pindarus and Tirteus sang the glories of the Greeks, who won laurels on the battle-field; and why should not the bards of Florence enkindle in these young bosoms the love of a similar glory? It was truly a grand spectacle to behold the flower of Italian genius assembled there—to hear the strains of Politian, Benivieni, and Lorenzo the Magnificent—to hear the philosophical disputations of Pico della Mirandola, and Marsilio Ficino; whilst chisel and hammer made the marble ring, and the canvas glowed with all the beauteous tintings of the painter. Thus was this garden a lyceum for the philosopher; an arcadia for the poet; and an academy for the artist. Caracci, in Bologna, was the only man who ever revived anything approaching this.

Mariotto Albertinelli, conscious of his imperfection in design, obtained permission to enter this school; and although Vasari does not state it, I think Porta did the same, as his pictures give us every reason to believe that he applied himself to the study of the statues. Most certainly he never could have given such relief to his figures, nay, nor such correct design, if he had not well understood the management of light and shading, and

Michelangiolo, Francesco Rusticci, Torrigiano, Granacci, Credi, Albertinelli, Baccio da Monte Lupo, etc. When the Medici were expelled Florence, (1494,) a great part of these objects of art was lost. V. Roscoe's Lorenzo de' Medici.

spent many years contemplating the antique and true.[1] As soon as they had made considerable proficiency, (Mariotto having adopted Baccio's style of colouring,) they began to paint, and to store up in a common fund, whatever they earned by their productions; a plan which was followed by Polidoro da Caravaggio and Maturino, in Rome, both of whom resemble Porta and Albertinelli.

For want of necessary documents we have not been able to discover all the works which they produced at this period. Vasari, however, assures us that they painted very many Madonnas for the city of Florence. "To mention," says he, "only such as came from Baccio's pencil, one of them, which is very beautiful, is now in the possession of Filippo di Averardo Salviati, and is much esteemed by him. Another was bought some time ago by Pier Maria delle Pozze, who, being a virtuoso and knowing its rare merits, would not part with it for any amount. Pier del Pugliese had a Madonna carved in marble, by Donatello, (in bassorelievo,) an exquisite work, for the preservation of which, he caused a little wooden tabernacle, with two doors, to be made, in order to enshrine it. Within this tabernacle, Baccio painted two little histories, one of which was the Nativity of our Lord, the other His Circumcision. These he painted in such perfect miniature, that no work in oil can surpass them; and on the outside of said doors, he painted an Annunciation in chiaroscuro." In these beauteous works that still remain, we easily discover the first dawnings of Porta's genius; so well designed and coloured are these delightful little figures. Rosini has engraved one of

[1] Lanzi is also of this opinion. V. History of Painting, Tuscan School Second Epoch.

these little histories: it is the Circumcision, or rather the Presentation in the temple; and it pleases me much more than the great painting which Baccio produced of the same subject for the noviciate of San Marco, after he had become a Friar.

Father Guglielmo della Valle, who has enriched Vasari's work with copious annotations, writes—that he saw, in Castel Franco, a picture by Porta, dated 1493. He does not state what it represented, but simply remarks that, "its outlines were sharply defined;" adding that it clearly proves "that the Friar profited more by Raffaello, than did the latter by him." This observation appears to us to be inopportune; since Baccio was then a mere youth, and retained much of Cosimo Rosselli's manner. Neither do we think it fair to contrast Porta's earliest works with the more perfect ones by Sanzio; but if any comparison is to be instituted between them, it should be at the precise moment when Raffaello came fresh from the school of Pietro Perugino, after having painted the Crucifixion for the Dominicans of Città di Castello. But we will have occasion to speak of this elsewhere. I will not place amongst the works of his youth, the portrait which Baccio is said to have made of himself, mentioned by Lanzi;[1] as Rosini has proved that this historian of Italian Painting has fallen into an error. We would rather expend some words on a painting known but to few, and which is perhaps amongst the best of his works. This is an Annunciation, now in the sacristy of San Marco, over the entrance door. It is generally supposed to have been the work of Porta, and though some may doubt our assertion, there are many points of resemblance

[1] Lanzi, History of Painting, Florentine School, Second Epoch.

between it and the paintings in Baccio's first manner. The tintings and management of the drapery seem to be so many convincing arguments in our favour. The crudeness of outline, which reminds us of Cosimo Rosselli, and which Porta subsequently softened in his other works, is here very apparent. If the figures of the Angel and of the Virgin be not very elegant, we cannot but admire the ingenuity and simplicity of a painter who flourished towards the close of the fifteenth century. But where we recognise the master's hand, is in the half figure of the Eternal Father that he painted in the upper part of the picture, revealing itself amid the clouds, and surrounded by a choir of most beautiful and graceful little angels. Here we trace a close resemblance to the other works by Baccio, and this announces a most able artist. I will finally observe that the garments of the Angel and Virgin are embroidered with gold, a peculiarity which we do not find in Porta's later productions.

Whilst these paintings were in progress, there came to Florence a wonderful man, who was destined to produce a great impression on the soul of Baccio della Porta, and to influence his future life. This was Fra Gerolamo Savonarola. In 1481 he visited Florence for a brief period; and in 1489 he returned thither at the invitation of Lorenzo de' Medici. We have elsewhere spoken of this great Christian orator, and now will confine ourselves to such facts as regard the painter's connection with him.

It is probable that Baccio had heard of him in the Medicean Garden, and that he had been an ocular witness of the effects which followed Savonarola's preaching. In fact, he had already captivated the most select portion of the artists, philosophers, and poets who frequented that spot consecrated to genius; and here, too, was

initated that friendship which united Porta, Credi, Botticelli, Benivieni, Mirandola, and other illustrious characters. Savonarola wisely thought that popular eloquence should never be dissociated from the study of the fine arts, philosophy, or the muses, and that its nature and object was closely identified with them. Hence, after the day's work was over, the painter, poet, sculptor, and philosopher retired from the beauteous garden to the neighbouring church of San Marco, to listen to the fervid eloquence of Fra Gerolamo. Baccio was so fascinated, that he could not live without *the Friar;* and as often as he ascended the pulpit, he was earliest in attendance, and the devoutest of his followers; so that his soul was divided between art and eloquence. Then did he find the man who was worthy of his friendship—the man whom he could make the depository of his confidence. A mute and eloquent language united the imaginative soul of the painter with the scathing spirit of the preacher. In fact, when Savonarola commanded the Florentine artists to make solemn reparation to that Christian decorum which their pencils and chisels had outraged, Baccio was the first to lay down at his feet all his designs in the nude, and such other works as sinned against modesty. It is almost superfluous to state that this friendship and familiarity irritated Albertinelli; for, though he had very little sympathy with Baccio's pursuits hitherto, now that he saw him taking pleasure in nothing else than spiritual canticles and the cathedratic exegeses of the Friar, he renounced all hope of his companionship. Mariotto, therefore, ceased to frequent Baccio's society, and having obtained the patronage of Alfonsina de' Medici, set to work alone.[1] But

[1] Vasari, Life of Mariotti Albertinelli.

he continued thus only for a brief period, for when Piero de' Medici was expelled in 1494, after having striven to destroy the semispent Republic, he lost the protection of Alfonsina, and then returned to Baccio, who received him with all courtesy and kindness. Nevertheless, far from adopting Porta's religious ideas, when the two parties known as Piagnoni and Arrabbiati sprung up in Florence, Mariotto soon espoused the latter, who were the implacable enemies of Savonarola, and consequently of Baccio. So terminated all communication between Albertinelli and his quondam colleague: so terminated that sympathy between the twain which made Vasari write that they were "one body and one soul."[1] Baccio it is true, loved Albertinelli, but we have already hinted at the character of the latter, and will place it in a clearer light as we proceed. At this period I will mention only two paintings by our artist, one small, and the other very large. The first is the portrait of Fra Gerolamo Savonarola, a tribute of affection which the painter rendered to the man who had so efficaciously spoken to his heart. He gives us only the head of the Friar, most exquisitely modelled and coloured; and I do not hesitate to assert, that no other portrait more clearly develops the working of a soul absorbed in the contemplation of a gigantic project. The two cornelians at Rome and Florence, though finely elaborated, cannot be compared to this likeness of the orator, in which there is no exaggeration.[2] Removed to Ferrara, I know not when, it was subsequently restored to Florence by Filippo di Alamanno Salviati. It subsequently adorned the cell of S

[1] Vasari, Life of Mariotti Albertinelli.

[2] He wrote at foot of it: "The effigy of Gerolamo, of Ferrara, the prophet sent by God." A very good copy of it has been made by the celebrated painter Antinori; it is now in the possession of Manelli, in Florence.

Catherine de' Ricci, in Prato, who *venerated its original.* When the monastery was suppressed it passed into the possession of Emolao Rubieri, (of Prato,) who preserves it with reverential love.[1]

The second painting is the grand fresco, representing the Final Judgment, in the chapel of the cemetry of the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova. Gerozzo Dini, who caused the said chapel to be built, had requested Baccio to paint within its precints some subject suited to the character of the place; and the artist very judiciously painted the Resurrection, as though he would thus impress suffering humanity, with the hope and consolation of the better life. "There," says Vasari, "he began to fresco the Judgment, which he conducted so diligently in the part he finished, that he added to his fame, and was much lauded for having depicted the glory of Paradise and Christ, with the Twelve Apostles judging the Twelve Tribes, which with their most beautiful draperies are softly coloured. The design, which he left unfinished, represents the figures dragged down to hell—their despair, agony, and shame of everlasting death; and one easily recognises the contentment and joy of the Saved, albeit the work be imperfect, as he attended more to religion than to painting." And elsewhere: "This work . . . is highly esteemed, for in this style, there could be nothing grander." In order that its parts and ensemble may be better understood, we will make a few remarks. When Vasari was writing of this Final Judgment, his memory must have failed him, as it often did in regard of other paintings; for you would vainly seek for these "Twelve Tribes," with their most beautiful draperies, softly coloured:

[1] Bibliographia Pratese, p. 9. This portrait is mentioned by Vasari.

unless, indeed, these words have reference to the immense multitude of the reprobate and elect, according to the Evangelical sentence.[1] It seems that in this painting, Baccio derived his inspiration from a similar work, which the heavenly imagination of the Angelico had executed on the doors of the armory, in the church of the Annunciation. Like the latter, he represents Christ the Judge, seated on the Clouds, in the same attitude and apparel; and the Virgin, who is sitting at his side, although too remote from Fra Angelico's ideal type, appears to us to be a repetition of what the latter had designed. The Apostles, who surround the Supreme Judge, must be numbered amongst the most beautiful and perfect figures that Baccio executed in his youth, whether we consider design, colouring, or expression. Some are of opinion that Raffaello availed himself of the upper part of Baccio's Judgment, when he painted in the Vatican that miracle of art, known as the Disputa of the Sacrament. I will not undertake to asseverate this. I will, however, observe that one of the Apostles represents the Blessed Angelico. It is the bald old man, (a three-quarter figure,) whose eyes are bent downwards. Some fancy that they recognise his portrait in the figure of a Dominican, whose profile we see amongst the elect; being led into this belief by Vasari, who, not remembering the precise position, erred in stating that it was in the under part of the painting; whereas, it is in the upper. And, indeed, the portrait of the Angelico that Vasari himself has given, in the second edition of his Lives of the Painters, in every respect resembles that of the Apostle of which I have spoken. Although Baccio had designed the entire history of the Judgment, he coloured only the upper part

[1] Matth. xix. 28.

of it; the rest having been finished by Mariotto Albertinelli, who introduced into the composition Giuliano Buggiardini, his disciple, himself, the infirmarian, some friars skilled in surgery, and on the sides Gerozzo and his wife, who caused that Judgment to be painted. Little of the under part of this work remains; for, on the destruction of the chapel of the cemetry, the wall was sawed through, in order to transport it to the court-yard near the actual hospital; and the painting received very considerable injury. The humidity of the place must soon complete its entire ruin. We will finally remark that the court-yard is low and narrow, and calculated to destroy all optical illusion, as the figures are of considerable dimensions: whereas, if the whole work were placed in a better light, and elevated higher than it is, we would be better enabled to appreciate the conception and workmanship of Porta and Albertinelli.[1]

Meanwhile, the termination of Savonarola's career was approaching. Voices of menace and bloody deeds presaged the tremendous ruin that was gathering over his head. His enemies, who, up to that moment, were kept within certain limits, now resolved on vengeance, proceeded to open outrage. Baccio, seeing the terrible conspiracy, ceased to paint the Final Judgment, and left it imperfect. On the eighth of April, 1498, the Florentines, known as the Arrabbiati, marched in military array to the convent of San Marco, to wreak their fury on Savonarola and those who had aided him in his attempt at Reform. More than five hundred citizens, commanded by Francesco Valori, took up their position within the walls, to defend Fra Gerolamo's life. Two hundred of the friars who were well armed, added themselves to

[1] In the Gallery of the Uffizj there are some original designs of this Last Judgment, executed by Fra Bartolommeo with a pen.

Valori's combatants, and resolved to make a desperate defence. Baccio della Porta, who was not so good a soldier as he was a painter, wishing withal to act the part of a true friend, although terror-stricken, took refuge within the besieged convent. Here he found Fra Benedetto, the miniaturist, a much braver man, who stood prepared to fight to the death. Finding all the doors barricaded, and the defenders on the alert, the Arrabbiati set fire to the gates of the church and convent. The Piagnoni then showed themselves to be leal to their master, and began to discharge their cross-bows and harquebuses from the roof, belfry, and windows. The friars, though some of them would gladly have drawn the sword, collected round Savonarola in the choir, and there prostrate before the Holy Sacrament, besought God to aid and have pity on them. Meanwhile, death and flight had thinned the ranks of the beseiged. One of them, Valori, who despaired of victory, left the convent, and he, with his wife and tender son, were slain on the instant. The assailants, having forced their way into the church, contaminated it with blood and carnage; and when the adverse parties engaged in hand-to-hand conflict, one may fancy the horror of the spectacle mid flame and smoke, and the groans and blasphemies of the wounded and dying. A German, who was an excellent marksman, clambered up into the pulpit, and fired, without mercy, on the Arrabbiati. As the latter gained ground, they rushed to the choir, but such was the resistance which they experienced from the narrow dimensions of the place, and the bravery of the men who opposed them, that they failed to open a passage to its interior. Finally, having scaled the walls, they attacked the Piagnoni, in front and flank. At this juncture, poor Baccio, who at first gave some proof of

valour, grew dreadfully alarmed, and cast away his unwonted arms, vowing to God, that if He snatched him from this peril, he would take the habit of S. Dominic, and close his days in religion. In order to stay the bloodshed, Savonarola spontaneously surrendered himself to his enemies, and Baccio witnessed the insults and tragical death of his illustrious friend. Wounded to the very depths of his soul, appalled by that terrible calamity, incapable of receiving counsel or consolation, he abandoned the pencil, for with Savonarola perished that holy flame which gave aliment to his fervid imaginings. Baccio da Monte Lupo, the sculptor, fleeing before the wrath of Fra Gerolamo's murderers, spent a long time wandering through Italy; whilst Botticelli, Cronaca, Lorenzo di Credi, and other partisans of the Friar, overwhelmed with grief, for a while ceased to cultivate their beloved arts.[1]

But Porta never forgot that dreadful day, nor his vow, and, like a true man, resolved to keep it. His brother, however, was a difficulty in the way; for, at his father's death, the care of the little Peter and the management of the paternal property devolved on him. Wherefore, having consulted Santi Pagnini, the Dominican, who was then domiciled in San Marco, the latter took charge of the younger brother during the period of the novitiate which Baccio was to perform far from Florence.[2] Baccio

[1] V. Burlamacchi and Vasari's Life of Fra Bartolommeo.

[2] An original document from the archives of S. Marco, which we will give at the end of this volume, proves that Santi Pagnini was for some time tutor to the young Pietro. The following is in the hand-writing of S. Pagnini: "By virtue of authority given me over Piero his brother, by Fra Bartolommeo diPaolo del Fattorino, when he surrendered his portion to him." V. Document.

then surrendered to Peter whatsoever property he h
together with his right to his patrimony, and hav
charged Albertinelli to finish the Final Judgmen
Santa Maria Nuova, (for which he had received
greater part of the stipulated payment,) he set out
once for Prato. July 26, A.D. 1500, he fulfilled his v
by taking the habit of the Preaching-Friars in
thirtieth year. Retaining his baptismal name, he w
admitted amongst the religious of the choir. In the
lowing year, he made his religious profession, a
returned to the convent of San Marco, Florence.[1] T
sudden resolution gave great annoyance to Por
friends; and as to Mariotto Albertinelli, Vasari infor
us "that he was almost out of his mind for the loss
his companion; and so astounded was he by the f
that he almost became desperate. Nevertheless,
Mariotto did not hate the Friars, of whom he was c
stantly speaking evil, and if he had not taken part w
the faction against Fra Gerolamo, his love for Bac

[1] Vasari and the Chronicles of the Convent of San Domenico, P
confirm this. But as Father della Valle questions it, we will cite a n
preserved in Martini's "Miscellanee," and published by the author o
Bibliografia Pratese (p. 115): "28th September, 1560. I, Alessa
Guardini, having gone to the convent of S. Marco in Florence, to m
inquiries anent Fra Bartolommeo, the painter of that Order, Fa
Onofrio Dazzi informed me that Fra Bartolommeo was invested in
convent of Prato many years ago; and said Onofrio is now eighty
years of age. This was written on the 8th of September, 1560.
turning to Prato to examine the Chronicle of San Domenico in that
Fra Cherubino, the Superior showed me some fragments of said Chr
which state that Fra Bartolommeo, a most excellent painter, who
this name in the world, was born in Savignano, and took the habit o
Order in Prato in said convent, of which he was a child. This
in the year 1500 (July 26th). In the following year he made his
fession."

would have made him take the habit in the same monastery." We will offer no remark on these words, as the facts already stated, as well as these that remain to be told, must clear up the truth.[1]

This first period of Porta's artistic life is neither the most fruitful nor the most glorious. All his works (of this period) evidence the manner and precepts of Cosimo Rosselli, and particularly a certain timidity which he soon abandoned. His colouring is vigorous, his shading well defined, and the draperies very beautiful. Nevertheless, I regard him as harsh in outline, and weak in airy perspective—defects of his age and early teaching. But Porta, who was destined to revive the examples of Fra Giovanni Angelico, inasmuch as the new tendencies of art permitted, triumphed over all these defects during the seventeen years he passed in the Dominican cloisters, where he may be said to have commenced his glorious career.

[1] V. Vasari's Life of Mariotto Albertinelli.

CHAPTER III.

Fra Bartolommeo, at the instance of the Religious and his Friends, resu his Pencil—He appoints Mariotto Albertinelli his Brother's Guardian He studies and imitates Lionardo da Vinci—His Intimacy with Raffa da Urbino—Works executed under the Influence of these two celebra Masters—The Beauties of this Second Period of the Artistic Career Fra Bartolommeo della Porta.

In the calm silence of his cell, mid the austerities of t cloister, Porta was a prey to profound and saddeni reflections. He had seen a people filled with enthusia acclaiming his bosom friend as a Saint and an Apost and, after a little while, that same people shivering t idol they adored the day before, and overwhelming with contempt and ruin. He remembered how Savon rola had lovingly laboured to preserve morality Florence—how his manly heart throbbed for his cou try's freedom—and the reward of all these noble aspi tions was the blazing pyre! Why, then, should exercise his art and genius to glorify a country whi slaves and libertines were destroying? How could aspire to be a great painter, when none but obsc productions found favour with the Florentines? T tempest of remembrances and affections rendered p Baccio incapable of resuming his pencil. On his retu to Florence, he was for a while domiciled in the vitiate of San Marco; and he has, as it were, chronic his sojourn by a painting which he executed in the s novitiate. It is for this reason Father della Va

suspected that he did not take the habit in Prato, but in San Marco at Florence.[1] Having spent some time in devout exercises, he was successively promoted to the Order of Deacon; but, not having made the necessary studies, he was not ordained a priest.

There was then in the convent of San Marco, the celebrated Orientalist, Santi Pagnini of Lucca, a man of wonderful genius, learning, and piety. Educated according to the severe discipline of Savonarola, who had banished scholasticism from his convent, and substituted the study of the Sacred Scriptures, and Oriental languages; Father Pagnini had applied himself to the same, with most happy results. In this illustrious theologian, Fra Bartolommeo della Porta found a friend, a brother, and a faithful appreciator of his merits. In a word, Pagnini was to Porta, what S. Antonino was to Fra Angelico. Not only four years had passed, as Vasari says, since Fra Bartolommeo had abandoned painting, but five, and mayhap six.[2] Father Santi Pagnini having been elected Prior of the convent of San Marco, in June, 1504, he, at the termination of his office, added the weight of his authority to the urgent instances of Fra Bartolommeo's friends, and thus overcame his repugnance to pencil and palette. But first of all, Fra Bartolommeo resolved so to provide for his brother, that the management of his temporal concerns and education should not interfere with his artistic works, or the duties of the cloister, to which he was scrupulously addicted. As Pietro del Fattorino evinced some talent for painting,

[1] See the Annotations to Vasari's Life of Fra Bartolommeo in the edition of the Classici di Milano, vol. vii.

[2] If Fra Bartolommeo had renounced painting on account of Savonarola's death, and resumed it in 1506, there must have been an interval of eight years, as Savonarola was *murdered* May 23, 1498.

he determined that he should study the art und
Mariotto Albertinelli, and that the latter should not on
be his brother's master, but also the administrator of h
property. Fra Bartolommeo, therefore, summoned th
Prior of San Marco, Santi Pagnini, Mariotto Albertinel
Biagio, father of Mariotto, and Pietro del Fattorin
who, on the 1st of January, 1505, signed a pub
instrument, which contained the following pro
sions:—

"Mariotto di Biagio, the painter, is to take charge
Piero, of Paul, (the agent) to teach him the art
painting, *and all kinds of mazoneria*,[1] during six yea
the first of which commences January 1st, 1505, t
epoch of the contract, and is to last till January 1
1511, without any payment for said time.

"Mariotto is to be the manager, conservator, allocat
and administrator of all the property inherited by virt
of the will of Paul, son of James, the agent; and t
said property is the following:—a house situated in t
parish of San Pier Gattolini—a vineyard in San Don
in Poggio, with other pieces of arable ground and woo
situated in Val di Nieve—and one hundred and elev
florins, at seven per cent. in the bank of the Commu
of Florence.

"Mariotto shall be bound to keep said Piero in hou
to educate, feed, and clothe him; and in case the pu
should ask him for money, he shall not be obliged
give him more than seven soldi per month.

"Mariotto Abertinelli is bound to have the office of
dead celebrated in the church of San Pier Gattolini,

[1] This word *Mazoneria* is sometimes used by Vasari in reference
building, just as the French employ the term; but this is the only exa
I can find of its being applied to painting, gilding, etc.

he soul of Paul, the agent; and he is to give for this urpose, as is usual, two lire and two pounds of wax."[1]

On the part of Pietro, Fra Bartolommeo, after having obtained the necessary faculties from his superiors, was obliged to give Mariotto, for the six years, the ususfructus of the aforesaid property; and it was stipulated, moreover, that in case Piero should desire to let the ground in Val di Nieve, at the expiration of his apprenticeship, he could not hire it out to any save Mariotto, at a just price; nor was he empowered to sell it to any other than Mariotto, at a valuation agreed upon by four men of that district.

It was also provided, in case Piero would not wish to live with Mariotto Albertinelli, and complete the term of six years, either because of *perverseness*, or because he had *learned very quickly*, that he (Piero) should give Mariotto such a sum, for said time, as might be approved of by the actual prior of San Marco. This was stipulated that Mariotto might not repent him of the instructions given to his pupil.

Finally, Piero agreed that in case he died without legitimate or natural children, within, or after said six years, the inheritor of the vineyard should be obliged to sell it to Mariotto, or his heirs, at a fair price; and that Mariotto should be perfectly free to make the purchase, or decline it. Both parties then pledged themselves to submit to the arbitration of the actual Prior of S. Marco.[2] Then follow the subscriptions of Ser Niccolo di Bartolo di Liegi, Santi Pagnini, Fra Bartolommeo, Pier di Paolo,

[1] This would lead us to believe that Fra Bartolommeo's father died in Florence, and was buried in said church.

[2] This arrangement seems to have been the safest for Piero's property

Mariotto Albertinelli, and of Biagio, father Mariotto.[1]

It is not my province to examine whether the conditions were honourable or otherwise; and I wi merely observe, that it appears strange that Fra Bart lommeo and Santi Pagnini would have confided Pierc education, and the management of his property, Albertinelli, whom they both knew to be a dissipate man. It may be that Biagio, the father of Mariott charged himself with the care of Piero's temporal affair Nevertheless, I cannot believe that the safety of th youth was sufficiently guaranteed.

I will make two other reflections, which naturall present themselves to the readers of this contract. I the first place, the very act of confiding his brother Albertinelli, would almost persuade us that Fra Bart lommeo had made up his mind never again to resum pencil or palette, as, otherwise, he would have superi tended the pictorial education of Piero, as he did that many others, lay-men as well as religious. This doul would almost amount to certainty, were we to plac implicit reliance on Vasari, who states that the first wor executed by Porta, after he had taken the Dominica habit, was the painting of S. Bernard, for the churc of the Florentine Abbey, since we have authentic doc ments to prove that that painting was finished in 150 or at the beginning of 1507; but not in 1504, or 150 as Vasari would have us to believe. In the secon place, Lanzi has erred when he stated that Raffael received instruction in colouring from Fra Bartolomme at the period of his first visit to Florence, in 1504; sin

[1] V. Document.

it appears quite manifest, that Porta had not then returned to painting. In our opinion, it was at the period of Raffaello's second visit, (1506,) that he availed himself of Fra Bartolommeo's precepts.[1]

Having placed his brother with Mariotto Albertinelli, Fra Bartolommeo once more resumed his pencil. On his arrival in the convent of San Marco, he there met all these artists of whom we have spoken in the first volume of these Memoirs, that is to say, the three distinguished miniaturists, two painters, one architect, and a nephew of Lucca della Robbia, a modeller in plaster.[2] The example of such confreres was calculated to reconcile him to the art which he had abandoned. Not being able to point to any work of his, anterior to the painting of S. Bernard, we will begin with it. Vasari writes of it thus:—"Bernardo del Bianco had caused to be constructed in the abbey of Florence, a chapel, richly and beautifully erected, of cut stone, after the designs of Bernardino da Rovezzano, a work which was then and is now much admired for its varied beauty. And to complete the decorations, Benedetto Buglioni had prepared angels and other figures of vitrified terra-cotta in full relief, placed within niches, with friezes consisting of the arms and devices of Bianco, mingled with heads of cherubims. For this chapel Bernardo desired to obtain an altar-piece, which should be worthy of its beauty; and feeling convinced that Fra Bartolommeo would be exactly the person to execute what he wished, he used every possible means, by the intervention of friends, and by all other methods, to dispose the Monk to that undertaking. Fra

[1] Lanzi's History of Painting, etc., Roman School, Second Epoch. Vasari's Life of Raffael. Baldinucci Notizie, etc.

[2] Vide Vol. I. Book ii. chap. xv.

Bartolommeo was then in his convent, exclusively occu
pied with his attention to the religious services, and t
the duties imposed by the rule of his Order, althoug
frequently entreated by the Prior, as well as by his ow
dearest friends, to commence some work in painting
Four years had now passed since he had refused t
execute any labours of that kind, but on the occasion w
are now describing, being pressed by the importunitie
of Bernardo del Bianco, he was prevailed on to begin th
picture of S. Bernard. The Saint is represented a
writing, when the Virgin appears to him, holding th
Divine Child in her arms, and borne by numerous figure
of children and angels, all painted by the master wit
exceeding delicacy. Beholding this appearance, S. Be
nard is lost in adoring contemplation, and there is
certain inexpressible radiance of look, which is, so t
speak, celestial, in his countenance, and which seems, t
him who considers the picture attentively, to becom
diffused over the whole work. There is besides an arc
above this painting which is executed in fresco, and
also finished with extraordinary zeal and care."[1] W
deem it our duty to speak of this work somewha
copiously.

Let the reader imagine Porta domiciled in tha
splendid gallery, (which his confrere, Fra Giovanni An
gelico, had frescoed in the convent of San Marco, at th
beginning of the preceding century,) with soul and hea
teeming with the sublime theories of supernatural beaut
propounded by Gerolamo Savonarola, and charged t
pourtray the heavenly vision of the Abbot of Clairvau

[1] Vasari's Life of Fra Bartolommeo, translated by Mrs. Jonathan Foste
The arch alluded to no longer exists, as it was destroyed when the Chur
was modernized.

It is easy to suppose that he deeply meditated the Coronation of the Virgin, by the Angelico; and that he derived inspiration from these beautiful images (revealed to Fra Giovanni in an ecstacy of love.) when he undertook to depict the apparition of the Virgin to the most tender and devout of her worshippers. Exquisite beyond description is this composition by our friar. Under a portico, commanding a prospect of a rich and luxuriant champaign, that forms the ground of the painting, we behold the holy Abbot prostrate.

("He, whom Mary's charms
Embellish'd, as the sun the morning star."[1])

On a desk, and scattered over the floor are the various volumes which were dictated by the glowing love of the mellifluous Doctor; and if there be any one insensate enough to gainsay this predicate, conceded by many a bygone age to Bernard, let him peruse these golden works, and he must taste the sweetness of paradise. The recluse is actually employed in writing the praises of Mary, at the very moment when you behold her descending on a translucent cloud, with the Infant Jesus, and a choir of Angels to beatify the holy contemplative; and he, ecstacised by the Vision, with hands upraised "and gestures such as speak a father's love," and countenance whereon a holy joy is diffused, seems to pronounce that everlasting strain which Dante ascribes to his lips in the thirty-third Canto of the Paradiso :—

"O Virgin mother, daughter of thy Son!
Created beings all in lowliness
Surpassing, as in height above them all;
Term by the eternal counsel pre-ordained," etc.

Oh! what consuming love and divine ecstacy radiate

[1] Dante, Paradiso, canto xxxii. Cary's Trans.

from the figure of the saint! Surely none but the Angelico could have depicted aught like this![1] Behind the holy abbot he placed S. Benedict and the Evangelist S. John, who exhibit complacency at this favour granted by the Virgin to the greatest hero of the middle ages. All these figures are well designed and coloured; and nothing can surpass the ease and grace of the Virgin's descent, which is replete with majesty and unconstrained dignity.[2] I will not characterise the figures of the Mother and Son as elegant, since they have been better depicted in other works; but the angels who surround them might be supposed to have been by an inferior hand, as far as outline and colouring are concerned. There are few paintings by Fra Bartolommeo in which he has not introduced beauteous angels, some sounding lutes, some supporting the draperies of the Madonna's throne, and others surrounding the Eternal, all of which are wonderful for correctness of design, freshness of colouring, and beauty of form; but these, in this picture, in my opinion, do not possess a single one of these graces. Some presumptuous Vandal has so injured this picture by retouchings, that it almost makes one weep to behold it. The figures of S. Bernard, which alone escaped this barbarism, establishes Porta's claim to eminence in art. Let us observe, moreover, that after the interruption of six years or more, we are not to marvel if his hand failed to embody all the graceful conceptions of his soul.[3]

[1] In the fresco of the *Coronation* by the Angelico in S. Mark's, there are some Saints, the expression of whose heads resembles that of Porta's S. Bernard.

[2] In the Gallery of the Florentine Academy there is a painting by an unknown hand, marked No. viii., attributed to Giottino. The Virgin appearing to the Saint between two Angels is of marvellous beauty. But the features of S. Bernard evince little or no emotion.

[3] This painting is now in the Florentine Academy. The abbey-church

This painting occasioned a long and vexatious controversy. Bernardo del Bianco, when charging Fra Bartolommeo with its execution, did not stipulate any fixed price, but simply agreed that if any question arose as to the value of the work, two common friends should be appointed to arbitrate on what it was worth. When the work was finished, Fra Bartolommeo demanded two hundred ducats, of which he had already received forty for expenses incurred. Bernardo, who was not inclined to give more than eighty ducats, regarded this demand as exorbitant. The painter then expressed himself satisfied with a hundred and sixty, but even this appeared to Bernardo del Bianco to be excessive. At length the abbot, Lorenzo di Credi, Mariotto Albertinelli, and other friends of both parties interfered, but all in vain, as neither Fra Bartolommeo nor Bernardo could be brought to an amicable arrangement. The question was then submitted to the Apothecaries who, at that period, were the umpires in all such differences.[1] But as the religious did not relish the idea of going before a secular tribunal, they gladly embraced the proposal of Francesco Magalotti, a relative of Bernardo del Bianco, and at the same time a friend of the Fathers of San Marco, who undertook to settle the dispute; whereon, the litigant parties agreed to submit to his arbitration. Magalotti having

retains another picture on the same subject, believed to be by Fra Filippo Lippi.

[1] In Florence, as well as in many other cities, the Arts were united in Corporations, and were divided into Major and Minor. The former were seven, and the latter fourteen. The Apothecaries, Doctors, and Painters formed one Corporation (of the Major Arts). Each of these Corporations had its own Consul and Gonfalonier. In 1571, the Grand Duke Cosimo the First allowed the Painters to separate from the Apothecaries. Gaye, Carteggio. Ined. v. 2, p. 39.

valued the work at one hundred ducats, an end was put to this vexatious procedure, July 17, 1507.[1]

From the moment Baccio left Cosimo Rosselli, he resolved to take Lionardo da Vinci for his model, and this will account for the exquisite tact of our artist. Having now determined to modify his style and manner, he applied himself with intensest diligence to the study of that grand exemplar.

Time, which had substituted the pure and simple imitation of the true for the traditional art of the Giottesque, had also very frequently witnessed the sacrifice of grace and decorum to mere naturalism. So much so, that very few seem to have observed how nature proceeds by the most varied modes to the conception of the beautiful; and that it does not limit them arbitrarily to a single object, but wisely divides and diffuses them over many; hence, it is necessary to select and assimilate such as best harmonize together. The cultivator, therefore, of the fine arts, should imitate the industrious bee, which extracts from the various flowers of the field, the substance that it distils into honey. I will not deny that the greater part of the painters of the Florentine school, in the fifteenth century, did study nature; but if we except very few, it seems to me that the generality of them rarely attained to the beautiful and graceful.[2] This, in my opinion, is to be accounted for by the models which they set before them, which were not taken from the genteel and noble classes of the citizens, but from the purlieus and high-ways. Lionardo da Vinci was the first who, so to say, with an exquisite

[1] V. Document.

[2] To this category belongs Andrea del Castagno, (the murderer,) Cosimo Rosselli, Andrea del Verrocchio and Pollaiuolo. How much were they no excelled by Francia, Perugino, and Pinturicchio!

sense of the beautiful, began to cull the choicest flowers of nature, and thus realise the beau-ideal. To elegance and harmony of figure, Lionardo wedded the harmony of colouring, and the science of chiaroscuro, of which he was a consummate master, as he was also of physical and natural sciences.

When Fra Bartolommeo di San Marco resumed his pencil, Vinci had fled from Milan, which was delivered from the tyranny of Lodovico Sforza, by the arms of Louis XII. He found a refuge in Florence, and the Gonfalonier, Pier Soderini, had just invited Michelangiolo Buonarotti to that city; or, we should rather say, arena, whereon these two great masters, than whom greater have not been, or may not arise again, were destined to leave the impress of their almost super-human genius. Vinci's arrival afforded Fra Bartolommeo great opportunities; and it is easy to suppose how quickly he formed the friendship of the painter of "The Supper," and how eagerly he applied himself to his directions and precepts in the theories of chiaroscuro and colouring. To give, as it were, a specimen of the Leonardesque style, he made an experiment in fresco for his convent of San Marco. Within a little arch, over the door of the small refectory, he painted, in half figures of the natural size, Jesus Christ Risen, and invited to partake of the hospitality of the Disciples, in the castle of Emaus. Here we find such evidence of Vinci's manner, and such a happy imitation of that sovereign master, that we almost fancy that Lionardo's hand had outlined and coloured these three beautiful figures. In fact, the head of our Lord, which Bartolommeo painted in profile, is so noble and exquisite, and the other two are so life-like, that none of the other Florentine painters of the period so nearly approached Lionardo. It grieves me to think

that this work of Porta has been ignored by the generality of writers and artists, although in a very conspicuous place. Instead of writing of, or studying other works by him far inferior to this, they should have given it a place amongst his chiefest productions. With the exception of Vasari, who barely mentions it amongst the last works of the Friar, Lanzi, Rosini, Rio, and others scarcely seem to have thought it worth notice. That it should be enumerated amongst his productions of this period, and when Lionardo was in Florence, is deducible from the fact of his having introduced the portrait of Father Niccolo Scomberg, if Vasari says what is true: it is the first figure (in profile), on the right, with the full and florid countenance. This young German had succeeded Father Santi Pagnini in the Priorate of San Marco, June, 1506; and in the year following, having been elected Procurator-General of the Order, he set out for Rome, where he was consecrated Archbishop of Capua, and raised to the Cardinalitial dignity.[1] I think that the other Disciple in that fresco—he of maturer age—is the portrait of Pagnini. Having frequently asked myself which of Fra Bartolommeo's pictures could have so charmed Raffaello as to cause him to take Porta for a model in his second manner, this alone, in my judgment, deserved that high honour.

Meanwhile, the rivalry which Pier Soderini may be said to have created between Michelangiolo and Lionardo da Vinci was destined to produce the happiest results to their common country, and to reflect glory on them both. All the lovers and cultivators of the Fine

[1] Annal. S. Marci. Vasari's Life of Fra Bartol. He also frescod an arch over the guest-house of S. Marco, and in this he painted Christ, with Cleophas and Luke, and he also painted the portrait of Fra Niccolo della Magna, who was afterwards Archbishop of Capua and Cardinal.

Arts anxiously awaited the creations of these two splendid geniuses, as they were now engaged to paint two grand works which were to be placed in the hall of the Council. The subject which Lionardo chose was the battle fought near Anghiari, A.D. 1440, in which the Florentines routed the army of Niccolo Piccinino, who was sent into Tuscany by Duke Filippo Maria Visconti. Michelangiolo produced the episode of the war of Pisa. It would be superfluous to describe the joy and delight with which every one beheld the cartoons of Vinci and Angiolo, or the impatience that they manifested to see these splendid designs, rendered still more splendid by the magic of colouring.[1] In fact, the most distinguished Florentine artists now became disciples of the two grand masters; and set about designing and studying these cartoons. Amongst them we find Aristotile da San Gallo, Ridolfo del Ghirlandajo, Franceso Granacci, Baccio Bandinelli, Alonso Beruguetta, the Spaniard; to whom we may add Andrea del Sarto, Francia Bigio, Jacopo Sansovino, Rosso, Maturino, Lorenzetto, Tribolo, then a mere child, Jacopo da Pontormo and Perin del Vaga.[2] Amongst these, though Vasari does not say so, I think Fra Bartolommeo should be enumerated, for he was really charmed by all Vinci's productions. At this period Raffaello, who was painting a history of Pius III. in the cathedral of Siena, and furnishing designs to his companion for these of Pius II. in the library of the said church, having heard of the works of the two Florentine

[1] Besides the Italian historians who have written of Lionardo, consult the little work of M. E. Delecluze, entitled, "Saggio intorno Lionardo da Vinci," translated into Italian, and enriched with copious Annotations by Sigg. Pini and Milanesi. Siena, 1844.

[2] Vasari, Life of Lionardo.

artists, abandoned the painting on which he was engaged, and set out for Florence to witness the powers of Michelangiolo and Lionardo. We fully agree with Father Luigi Pungileoni, who dates this second visit of Raffaello to Florence in 1506.[1]

It was in the month of October that Sanzio arrived in Florence. He gazed with astonishment on the cartoons of these two grand masters, and, never tired of learning, he initiated his friendship with Rodolfo del Ghirlandajo, Aristotile di San Gallo, and a still more intimate union with Fra Bartolommeo di San Marco. "Fra Bartolommeo was then entering his thirty-eighth year, and the Painter of Urbino, his twenty-fourth."[2] "When one thinks of the first greetings of these two great souls, destined to fill the world with their fame, and to give such examples of virtue to posterity, poor human nature has just cause to grow proud. And, is it possible, that with such noble precedents before them, men of genius should be found to call to their aid the effects of the vilest passions, in order to degrade our souls? As long as history shall preserve to us the names of Socrates, Cicero, Trajan, Raffaello, and Washington, a voice shall peal out from the innermost recesses of our consciences, crying, shame upon them."[3] We regard this episode to be so glorious for the painter of San Marco, and

[1] It would be tedious to examine all the discrepancies of historians respecting this visit of Raffaello to Florence. Pungileoni, with whom Rosini agrees, says it took place in 1506; but many doubt whether it was his first or second visit. Others would have us believe that he visited the city thrice; and Pungileoni does not deny it. I have elsewhere said that Vasari dates the commencement of Porta's intimacy with Raffaello on his second visit; but he contradicts himself in the Life of Fra Bartolommeo.

[2] Pungileoni, Elogio di, Raffaello.

[3] Rosini, Storia della Pitt.

so important for the history of Art, that we must needs speak of it at some length.

When Raffaello arrived on Arno's beauteous banks, it is probable that Lionardo and Michelangiolo had already taken their departure, and that in their absence, Fra Bartolommeo *was the star of the Florentine school.*[1] Mariotto Albertinelli and Ridolfo del Ghirlandajo who, in colouring, so nearly approach Fra Bartolommeo, that they almost deceive the most educated eye, had both learned from him this chiefest element of painting; and of this Vasari is a witness. But to colouring, Fra Bartolommeo added a grandiose style, and a study of chiaroscuro, in which he was surpassed by none of the Florentines, save Lionardo. This has induced Rosini to affirm that if the Friar of San Marco did not excel Vinci and Buonarotti, he certainly came very near them.[2] To all this, I would add, that in colouring, he may be compared to them both; and Sanzio himself, seems to have thought so. Hence, it was that he selected Porta for his model, and sought his counsel and guidance; and as the Friar was equally modest, he requested Raffaello to indoctrinate him in the theories of perspective.[3] Where will you find master and disciple like these?

[1] Rosini, Storia della Pitt. [2] Rosini, Ibid.

[3] This fact, narrated by Vasari, has been admitted by all historians of Art; nor was it pretermitted by Pungioleoni. I will barely observe that Vasari contradicts himself; for, after stating that Raffaello, at the time of his second visit to Florence, taught Fra Bartol. perspective, and that the former learned colouring from him; he writes "Raffaello had opportunity for improving in perspective, thanks to the friendship which he contracted with Fra Bartol. della Porta in 1505." As to the rest, M. Quatremere de Quincy does not hesitate to assert, that Raffaello was indebted to Fra Bartol. for the modification in pencilling and colouring that distinguishes his second manner. V. Life and Works of Raffaello by De Quincy.

Often as I pace these solitary cloisters of the convent of San Marco, I fancy that I behold Raffaello ecstatically contemplating the celestial paintings of the Angelico, and my imagination evokes Fra Bartolommeo della Porta, Fra Paolino di Pistoja, Fra Eustachio, Fra Benedetto, the miniaturist, and Fra Ambrogio della Robbia, all of whom are grouped round him of Urbino. Methinks I hear Raffaello asking Porta—"Do you think we shall ever equal the divine ecstacy of that truly Angelic Painter?" My fantasy then represents Fra Bartolommeo buried in profound silence, as though he despaired of such a result; whilst Raffaello's flashing eye seems to say, "Genius like mine cannot shrink from the trial." Reflections such as these affect me to the very heart.

Raffaello's sojourn in Florence, that probably lasted from the end of 1506 to 1508, does not exclude a brief visit that he paid to Urbino in the Spring or Summer of 1507.[1] On his return to Florence, after embracing the Friar, it would appear that they both set about producing some work in which Fra Bartolommeo imitated the

[1] This friendship between Raffaello and Bartol. is the subject of a painting by Vincenzo Chialli, now in the possession of Vincenzo Sermolli. He represented these two personages under a portico on the ground floor of the convent. From a door in the back ground we see the studio of Fra Bartolommeo, and on a bracket the wooden figure used by painters for the arrangement of drapery, by which Chialli gives us to understand that we are indebted for this invention to Fra Bartolommeo. The latter has just taken Raffaello's hand reverentially and affectionately, and seems to conduct him into his studio. On the same line, on the right, is Paul of Pistoja (the friar of this name) an able painter, and disciple of Fra Bartol., who ceases to polish a piece of porphyry, on which the colours were prepared, and cap in hand, gazes timidly and respectfully on the great man, whom all saluted as the Prince of Painters. Dragomanni, V. e. Op, di Vincenzo Chialli, Florence, 1841.

grace of the Urbinese, and the latter the style of the Friar's colouring. This, however, is a conjecture, which we pronounce with great timidity, leaving such an important subject to be discussed by those who are more deeply read in Art-History. Nevertheless, we shall soon see Raffaello, in the meridian of his glory, taking up his classic pencil to finish a work which Porta had left imperfect at Rome; and allowing Ridolfo del Ghirlandajo to tint the drapery of his *Vergine del Baldacchino* in Florence. What wonder, then, if what we have stated occurred at a period when these two masters were imparting instruction to each other? In the description of the paintings in the gallery of M. D' Abiel, minister of the Hanseatic cities, published in Paris, in 1824, there is mention of an oval picture, four feet in diameter, with three quarter figures, representing S. Francis between two angels, kneeling before the Virgin, who has the Divine Infant on her knees; and a third angel kneeling with a little S. John, who presents some fruits to the Infant. This work belonged to the collection of Cardinal Bonzi, who brought it to France in 1671; and it is said to have been commenced by Fra Bartolommeo, and finished by Raffaello, after the death of the former.[1] Now, as Raffaello never came to Florence after Porta's death, and as Porta's sojourn in Rome was very brief, it appears to me, that if they both worked at this picture, it must have been in Florence during Sanzio's second or third visit.

An illustrious artist, Count Carlo della Porta, assures me that he saw in Milan, in the mansion of the Fumagalli family, a little tryptich, one half of which is

[1] De Quincy. This Madonna is called "del Cappuccino."

thought to have been painted by Raffaello, and the othe by Fra Bartolommeo. In the centre is the B. V., wit her Son in her arms, and inside of the little doors ar two Saints; and on the outside, S. Catherine and S Barbara. In the Virgin, he says, he can recognise th hand of Fra Bartolommeo, and Raffaello's in the othe four figures. During the time of this friendship betwee the Urbinese and Fra Bartolommeo, Vasari says that th latter executed, in San Marco, Florence, "a paintin with an infinity of figures which is now in the possession c the king of France."[1] To this we might add some othe paintings, of which the same historian speaks in the fo lowing terms: "He executed some paintings for John Cardinal de' Medici, (afterwards Leo X.,) and he painte for Agnolo Doni a Madonna of extraordinary beauty which is now the altar-piece of his chapel."[2] Monsigno Bottari states that this picture passed into the gallery c Cardinal Corsini; and Lanzi says that there is in th Corsini gallery at Rome a Holy Family by Fra Barto

[1] Masselli says that this picture is in the R. Museum, (Paris,) together wit another by the same painter, which represents the Virgin on a throne in th midst of various saints, like the preceding; but the first has S. Catherin receiving the ring from the Infant Jesus; and the second represents th Archangel Gabriel in the air, in the act of descending to perform his sublim mission: the date of this last work is 1515. There is an important memo of the first picture in the archives of San Marco, which tells us that it wa bought by the Florentine Republic, as a gift for the French Ambassador, i 1512; and that Fra Bartol. received 200 ducats for it. This notice has bee extracted from the original catalogue of Porta's works, written by the synd of said convent. We will give it in its entirety at the end of the life of th painter.

[2] This picture for Cardinal de' Medici, is mentioned thus in said catalogue :— "Item, a picture of about two braccia, in which there is a Nativity, an angels, and a landscape, value 50 ducats, given to Cardinal de' Medici, no Pope X. It was presented to him by the prior and fathers."

lommeo, which may be regarded as the most graceful of all his works in this style.[1] In this there are manifest evidences of the elegance of Raffaello. Rio thinks that he can trace a marked resemblance of style between these two painters in the Holy Family belonging to Cardinal Fesch.[2]

But, if the Friar of San Marco studied to collect the choicest and most fragrant flowers of Sanzio, the latter abandoned some remnants of that crudeness that characterised his first manner—thus imitating Porta in the large and grandiose style, as well as in the vigour and blending of his colouring. That painting of Raffaello's, which, in my judgment, exhibits decided imitation of the Friar, is the Madonna of the Baldacchino, now in the Pitti Gallery. The traits of this resemblance to Fra Bartolommeo's style are discernible not only in the composition, but also in the tinting and drapery of the robes; not to speak of the figure of S. Peter, and that of the Infant Jesus, which seem to have been designed by him. M Rio, and even many able Florentine artists, have remarked this.[3]

We will here conclude the second period of Porta's career. It embraces only two years. It is true that it did not produce many paintings, but it sowed these choicest seeds, which were soon to germinate in the third

[1] History of Painting, Fl. School, Epoch 2.

[2] Poesie Chretienne, chap. ix., p. 375.

[3] Rio, loc. cit., p. 377. M. Rio remarks that the great fresco of the Crucifixion, with the four saints in Siena, may have been executed by Fra Bartol. at this period of his intimacy with Raffaello. M. Rio errs in stating that it is in the church of S. Agostino, as it is in the cloister of the convent del Santo Spirito. Vasari says nothing of it. In Siena it was always regarded as a very inferior work of Porta's. Latterly, however, Sig. Gaetano Milanesi has proved it to be not Fra Bartolommeo's production, but that of two disciples of his, concerning whom we will have occasion to speak.

period, the most perfect paintings that ever came fro his pencil. Wedding the graces of Raffaello to th severe nobility of Lionardo; uniting to harmony tinting the power of chiaroscuro, and the noble theorie of perspective, Fra Bartolommeo collected together th sparse elements of painting, and thus arrived at tha perfection which has been attained by very few.

CHAPTER IV.

Fra Bartolommeo goes to Venice—The Paintings he undertook to execu in that City—His return to Florence—Artistic partnership with Mariot Albertinelli—Its Dissolution.

Those who write of the origin and vicissitudes of Italia Art, are wont to glorify that project of Lodovico Caracc who, to stay the ruin caused by the Bolognese schoc instead of restoring and elevating it to splendou leagued himself with his cousins Annibale and Agc tino, and imagined that the only way by which h could accomplish such a glorious aim, was to set abo culling the choicest beauties of Raffaello, Correggi Tiziano, Andrea del Sarto, and others; fancying th he might thus gather together, and, as it were, conce trate in a single one all the best characteristics of th various Italian schools. In a word, that celebrated t umvirate sought to revive in art the doctrines ar examples of the Alexandrine philosophers, and to inve an Ecclectic school of painting somewhat analogous the philosophy similarly designated. Every one kno how this project eventuated. I cannot commend Ann

ale Caracci, who, to parade his art and genius, frequently attempted to imitate the various Italian schools n the different figures of a single painting, as he did in he far-famed picture of S. George, where we find one igure coloured in the manner of Paolo Veronese, anoher after the style of Coreggio, a third in Tiziano's nanner, and the last in Parmigiano's.[1] This idea has lways appeared to us to be as bizarre as that of a writer vho, in the same work, would strive to imitate the style f Dante, Giucciardini, Davanzati, and conclude it in he narcotic prose of Monsignor Della Casa.[2] Although lisposed to admire the ingenuity of the inventors of this nethod, who may be justly styled *Intarsiatori*,[3] we firmly elieve that they all lack that impress of originality which livides the humble herd of imitators from the lordly anks of genius.

Before the Caracci conceived this design, a century ad passed over the mouldering remains of Fra Bartoommeo; and, in my judgment, he was the first to introuce this eclecticism into painting, and with far happier esults. For, if he was such a perfect master of design nd colouring, that some of his works seem to have been roduced by Raffaello, and others by Giorgione, it must e confessed that he so fused the style of these great asters, as to give to each of his paintings a mannerism eculiarly his own, and not belonging to any *one*.

Whosoever of the Florentine school could so nearly pproach Lionardo and Raffaello as Fra Bartolommeo

[1] Lanzi, Hist. of Painting, Bolognese School. Third Epoch.

[2] Della Casa—a well-known poet and prose writer, belonging to the court Leo X.

[3] Tarsia is a sort of mosaic, made of wood, by the conjunction of diverse inute pieces variously coloured to represent histories, figures, perspectives, c. Baldinucci. Vocal. dell' Arte del Disegno.

did, would not have thought himself so remote fro perfection as to be obliged to go in quest of new beauti and other novel accessories. Not thus, however, did t good Friar argue; for, hearing that the Venetians we famed for their vigour and harmony of colouring—th in this particular, they excelled all the painters of t age, he began to think that, if he could supera to the chiaroscuro of Vinci and the elegant forms Raffaello a greater warmth of his own pencilling, must have bestowed on the school of Florence the on grace which it needed. He therefore resolved to s out for Venice, and, accompanied by the syndic the convent of San Marco, he reached the Queenly ci of the Adriatic in the April of 1508. Here it was h good fortune to meet an ancient and trusted friend, h fellow-citizen, the celebrated sculptor, Baccio da Mon Lupo, who, flying from the tyranny of the Arrabbia and the Medicean despots, had found an asylum und the Republican Flag of Venice. Oh! who cou describe the greetings and affectionate embraces of the two illustrious Florentine artists! Baccio da Monte Lu clasped in his arms that Porta (who probably had foug by his side within the besieged walls of S. Marco,) no clad in the humble habit and seeking consolation for wounded spirit in the silence of the cloister; and Po pressed to his bosom, in a strange land, the friend w had shared his affections and all the tribulations of th dolorous years, and who, worthy of a better fortune, now an exile in search of freedom and repose[1] T

[1] Burlamacchi, Vita di Fra Gerol. Savonarola, p. 166: "Whilst fire of persecution raged against Father Gerolamo, many of his followers v obliged to leave Florence, amongst whom was an eminent sculptor na Bartolo da Monte Lupo, who, wishing to go to Venice, was detained h Canon in Bologna, who caused him to execute the Twelve Apostles in reli

fact, unnoticed by Vasari, in my judgment throws light on them both. When Fra Bartolommeo reached Venice, Giorgione da Castel Franco was educating Tiziano, and Sebastiano Luciani, afterwards called del Piombo, the two greatest colourists of that school; and it is easy to suppose that Porta derived new instructions in the theories of the Art from the paintings and precepts of Giorgione. Thus the Friar, who in Florence enjoyed the reputation of being one of the grandest colourists, and who had instructed Raffaello and Ridolfo del Ghirlandajo, in his mature years did not think it unworthy of him to become the disciple of Giorgione. A grand example, truly, and in many respects like that of Fra Angelico, who, in hale old age, set about studying the works of young Masaccio.

When the Dominicans of the convent of San Pietro di Murano learned that such an illustrious member of their institute had come to the city of the Doges, they caused Father Bartolommeo Dalzano, the vicar of their convent, to wait on Porta, and beseech him to leave them some specimen of his power in art. Yielding to their request, Fra Bartolommeo undertook to paint *a picture on canvas*,[1] the value of which was to be between seventy and one hundred ducats. At first they gave him three ducats to purchase the colours, and an instalment of twenty-five more, to be deducted from the value of the work, which was to be determined by some friends, just

work so admirable, that all the city went out to see it. This Bartolo is still living, and he himself told me this with his own mouth." Here is an important work by this famous sculptor, unnoticed by Vasari.

[1] This is an allusion to the method which Fra Bart. adopted for the preservation of his pictures. He was wont to spread canvas over the panel, in order to prevent apertures and fissures in the wood. V. Vasari.

as he had arranged with Bernardo del Bianco in Flo rence. These twenty-eight ducats must have been dis bursed partly by the sculptor Baccio da Monte Lupo (we have not ascertained what understanding may hav been between them,) and partly by Father Bartolomme Dalzano, who sold a volume of the letters of S. Catherin of Siena, to procure the money. The Records do no state that the subject of the picture was suggested t Porta. Not being able to make a long sojourn in Venice he returned to Florence, whilst Raffaello was still there and he immediately set about executing that wonderfu painting of S. Catherine and S. Mary Magdalene, whic is now in S. Romano di Lucca, and which I regard a the grandest work of this celebrated painter.

In the upper part of the picture, he represente the Eternal Father seated in great majesty on a clou with His right hand in the act of blessing the ho women at His feet, and holding in His left an ope volume, whereon is written: "I am Alpha and Omega thus to signify that He was the beginning and end of a things. There is such divinity in this figure, that, beholding it, the soul is filled with profoundest reverenc and no other could have given us a more striking ima of "Him of the eternal years," described by John t Evangelist. Round the throne is a band of angels, t of whom rain down a shower of flowers upon the ho and enamoured women. Oh, what beauteous angel How truly and exquisitely coloured! Let no one fan that he can behold anything excelling them. Nothi can be more charming than one of them, who, havi made his head a footstool for the feet of the Etern raises with his tiny hands a veil, on which we read the words, that the painter took from a work attributed to

Dionysius the Areopagite: "*Divinus Amor extasim facit*;"[1] thus maintaining the traditions and the maxims of Christian art, which availed itself of the Scriptures and the Fathers to elevate the minds of the people to the contemplation of heavenly things. In the under part of the picture he painted S. Mary Magdalene on the right, and on the left S. Catherine; both rapt in ecstacy, and raised from the ground by a band of cherubims, who, seen from a distance, present the form and semblance of a white translucent cloud: this is a characteristic so peculiar to Porta, that I have not discovered it in any other painter. The Seraphim of Siena, the spotless maiden, rivets her eyes on the Eternal Father, and seems to be inundated by the glory of the heavens, whose portals are opened to her. The movement of the arms, of the countenance and whole person wonderfully expresses the ecstacy of that enamoured soul. The penitent Magdalene holds the accustomed vase, and has her eyes bent downwards, as though she deemed herself unworthy of gazing on that glory; or better still, because she would fain raise her soul to the contemplation of the celestial and imperishable, by meditating the fragile and sensible object. And she truly shows that she is absorbed in the profoundest thought. Even the Angelico himself could not have pourtrayed more powerfully this divine ecstacy and devout recollection. The landscape, forming the ground of the picture, is also very admirable, and so ably handled, that it may bear comparison with the best productions of the Venetian masters; a clear proof of the diligence with which he studied that school whose landscapes are the boast of Italy.

This painting clearly proves that Fra Bartolommeo

[1] "Divine Love causeth Ecstacy."—De Divinis Nominib. lib. iv.

possessed a warm imagination, a sweetness of pencillin
and a richness of types, which cannot be surpassed in an
other of his productions. Here, every thing is perfec
the design impressive and correct, the colouring harm
nious, the outlines well defined, the folds of the drape
simple and natural; whilst the grace and beauty of th
figures so nearly approach Raffaello, that some wou
have us believe that this picture was designed by Sanzi
and coloured by the Friar.[1] Even though all the oth
paintings by Fra Bartolommeo should be destroyed, th
alone would be sufficient to entitle him to a pla
amongst the most distinguished artists; and, in m
judgment, it is his chef d'œuvre. I am not, howeve
prepared to say, that it may be regarded an eclecticis
of the Venetian, Roman, and Lombard schools. I w
finally observe, that this work suffered much during thr
centuries, from the action of the sun, and became so a
and discoloured that Professor Ridolfi says, "it look
as if it had not been painted in oil, but in tempera;
much so, that no one appreciated it." Admirabl
restored by Professor Nardi, it has now resumed
ancient beauty.

This, like the painting he executed for Bernardo d
Bianco, was the cause of litigation. As soon as it w

[1] Rio Poesie Chretienne, ch. ix. p. 381. This graceful writer, like Va
has erred in stating that S. Catherine, V. M. is introduced into this pain
Rumohr relates that the original designs of the two principal angels of
picture, which are in the Gallery of the Uffizj, Florence, were for a
time attributed to Lionardo da Vinci, and were on that account pla
among the other designs by that celebrated master. On compar
them with the originals, they were discovered to have been by Fra Ba
lommeo della Porta (Rio. loc. cit.) The cartoons of one part of the com
sition are now in the Gallery of the Florentine Academy, marked 6, 8.

finished, Fra Bartolommeo notified the religious of the fact; but owing to the war, (it was the period of the League of Cambray,) and the death of Bartolommeo Dalzano, the Friars of the convent of San Pietro (del Murano), gave themselves no concern about it. After a brief interval they sent two of their religious to Florence to arrange the residue of the price. The picture had been valued at more than one hundred ducats; nevertheless, in consideration of the twenty-eight already received, Porta declared himself satisfied with fifty more. Not acceding to this settlement, the two religious returned to Murano, and appeared no more in the transaction. At the end of about three years, the Fathers of San Marco sent a protest to the convent of San Pietro, dated January 15, 1511, in which they declared that, if after the expiration of ten days, they did not take the picture and disburse the balance, it should be sold, and the twenty-eight ducats forfeited. As they returned no answer, the picture remained a considerable while in Florence.[1] The Registry of the convent of San Marco states, that this work was given as a present to a friend of the Order; and I doubt not that Father Pagnini, of Lucca, the bosom friend of Fra Bartolommeo was the person on whom it was bestowed, and that he subsequently presented it to his own natal place. This was not the only picture which Porta bestowed on Pagnini, for the Registry, already quoted, gives us to understand that he presented him with two little paintings meant for a book, representing, on one side, the Nativity, and on the other, the Crucifixion, the Virgin, and St. John, which were valued at sixteen ducats. Pagnini afterwards gave them to Monsignor Zanobi Gaddi.[2]

[1] V. Document.

[2] This same subject was painted in the same manner, a second time, by

Another marvellous painting, in which all connoisseurs of art recognise a most happy imitation of the Venetian school, is the S. Vincent Ferrer; a work that passed from the convent of San Marco to the gallery of the Florentine Academy. "He," writes Vasari, "painted a figure in oil over the door which leads into the sacristy of the convent, the subject being San Vincenzo, who was a Monk of his own Order, preaching on the rigours of the Divine justice. In the attitude of this figure, but still more in the head, there is all that sternness and imposing severity, usually manifest in the countenance of the preacher who is labouring to induce men, obstinate in their sins, to amendment of life, by setting before them the terrors of the justice of God; *not painted, but really in life*, does this admirable figure appear to him who regards it attentively, so powerful is the relief with which it is executed, and very much is it to be lamented that the painting is rapidly becoming a ruin, being cracked all over from having been painted with fresh colours, on a fresh ground, as I have remarked, respecting the works of Pietro Perugino, painted in the Ingesuati."[1] In fact, so wonderful is the management of chiaroscuro and colouring in this work, that the figure seems about to detach itself from the ground of the picture. The effect is considerably heightened by the niche, in admirable perspective, painted on the upper part, in a semicircular shape, which forms the ground of the picture; and the life-like figure of the Saint, seen almost to spring forth from the deep shading. Monsignor Bottari says that this work might easily pass for one

Fra Bartol. He gave it to the Prior of S. Marco, F. Bartol. da Faenza, who gave it to his brother. It was valued at sixteen ducats!

[1] The Dominicans of Siena possess a little copy on canvas, which seems to have been executed by Fra Bartolommeo, it is so admirably coloured.

Giorgione or Tiziano;[1] and, in my judgment, no other work by Fra Bartolommeo, so closely resembles the colouring of the Venetians.

Following the method we have hitherto observed, and mentioning only the principal works of Porta, according to the order of time, and leaving the minor ones for the copious clenchus which shall be given at the close of this life, we deem it well, before proceeding further, to publish a very important notice that we have discovered in the archives of San Marco, which has not met the eye of any historian of Art.[2] This is the artistic partnership between Mariotto Albertinelli, and Fra Bartolommeo della Porta, which commenced early in 1509. Whether it was that Pier del Fattorino would not continue to study under Albertinelli, on any other conditions, (we have no other record of him,) or that Mariotto, broken down by dissipation, had been reduced to want, it appears that he once more sought Fra Bartolommeo's society. The latter having many commissions to execute, and knowing that Albertinelli had made himself master of his manner, received him with all charity and urbanity. At the time of their earliest association, they worked together in the house of Fra Bartolommeo, near the Roman gate, but it would appear that they now set about painting in the same studio, in the convent of S. Mark. I think that this studio was situated near the little cloister that leads to the hospice of the religious. In fact, the Chronicle describing the visit of Leo X., who came to S. Mark's on the Feast of

[1] This painting has been recently restored; but still exhibits marks of injury. In the Memoirs of the Syndic of the convent it is valued at sixteen ducats.

[2] Professor Rosini, to whom I have communicated this notice, mentions it in his most valuable history of Italian Painting.

the Epiphany, in 1516, and dined with the religious adds that—"The meats were cooked hard by the lavatory and hospice, which is near the studio." These words, fancy, clearly indicate the place in which they cultivated and taught the arts. It was here that Fra Bartolommeo educated all these youths mentioned by Vasari and Lanzi; that is Fra Paolino da Pistoja, Benedetto Ciafanini, Gabriele Rustici, and Cecchino del Frate.[1] To these we will add Fra Andrea, who took the Dominican habit in 1500, and who is described in a volume of Miscellanies, in the conventual archives, as occupied in assisting Porta; and a Fra Agostino, of whom we will speak hereafter.[2]

This artistic partnership, which his superiors allowed Fra Bartolommeo to form with Albertinelli, may be described in a few words. The Syndic of the convent was bound to supply colours, canvas, and the other necessaries, for the two painters, and, whensoever the partnership was dissolved, after deducting all expenses the paintings were to be sold, one-half of whatever they might bring going to Mariotto, and the other to Porta, or rather to his convent. Fra Bartolommeo's vow of poverty not permitting him to appropriate any monies resulting from his labours, he may be said to have earned little else than the applause of his contemporaries.[3] After all that we have hitherto said, I will now answer a few questions, which will naturally suggest themselves to the reader. Were all the

[1] Vasari, Life of Fra Bartol. in fine. Lanzi, Florentine School, Second Epoch.

[2] Amongst other entries in a book of "Miscellanee," in the archives of S. Marco, we find, ad ann. 1512, March 20, "three gold florins to Fra Andrea the lay-brother, for gold used in the paintings."

[3] Razzi, (Storia degli Uomini Illustri), says that the painters of the Order were exempt from the duty of reciting the Divine Office *in choro*, and that

paintings, during the period of this partnership, entirely executed by Fra Bartolommeo, or had Albertinelli a hand in them? Were they all originals? After having attentively perused an ancient document, which shall be given amongst others hereafter, we answer, that all the paintings were designed by Fra Bartolommeo; that Mariotto coloured some of them, and that Porta gave them the final touches, and the stamp of originality, just as Raffaello did when assisted by Penni, Giulio Romano, and others. Moreover, whenever Porta entirely designed and coloured any work, he was wont to inscribe it with his name, and the year in which it was produced. We have two documents regarding this artistic partnership; the first of which relates to its dissolution, and the division of all the paintings and necessaries. This is in Albertinelli's hand-writing. The second is the often cited catalogue of Porta's pictures, given to us by Father Bartolommeo Cavalcanti, Syndic of the convent of San Marco. These documents, concordant in every other respect, differ as regards one of the most perfect pictures that ever came from the pencil of the Friar. This is that most beautiful work already described, in which the Eternal Father blesses S. Catherine and S. Mary Magdalene, now in San Romano di Lucca. The Memoirs of the convent state that this picture was finished in a *very short time* after Fra Bartolommeo had returned from Venice; that is to say, in the June, or July, of 1508.[1] The partnership, however, did not commence till early in the following year, when that picture was either wholly or almost finished. We have said that it was

the money they earned went to the support of the convent. They were allowed, however, to retain as much as was necessary for purchasing colours, etc.

[1] Ricordanze. ad ann. 1511.

valued at ninety ducats, and that it is numbered amongst the works presented as gifts. At the dissolution of the partnership, however, the first mentioned is that of God the Father, with S. Catherine, and S. Mary Magdalene valued at sixty ducats, and recorded as belonging to Fra Bartolommeo. I think, however, that this was a repetition of the former; and the difference of the price as well as the time in which it was executed, may be taken as an argument for this assertion. Nor should we forget that the Syndic of the convent, in his catalogue of some pictures painted by Fra Bartolommeo, during his partnership with Mariotto, does not mention that of Lucca. We have thought it necessary to say this much lest any doubt might arise concerning the originality of that most splendid painting.

Continuing to speak of these which were indubitably produced during the partnership, we find the really grand picture of the Virgin between two Saints, now in the cathedral of Lucca. Nor do I hesitate to affirm, that that city is indebted to Pagnini for this marvellous work by Porta. This picture is mentioned in both the aforesaid documents; and the inscription of Fra Bartolommeo's name, certifies to us that the design and colouring were entirely his own. In my opinion, it possesses the graceful nobility of Raffaello, and the harmonious tinting of the Venetians. If we except the dimensions it is nowise inferior to the other in San Romano, of which we have spoken. The Marquis Antonio Mazzarosa published a description of it in a letter that he addressed to the celebrated Pietro Giordani, and we will avail ourselves of a few fragments of his remarks:—

"There are seven figures, that is to say, the Virgin who, with Jesus at her breast, is seated on a pedestal

the centre; two Angels are over her in the act of crowning her; S. Stephen is on the right, and S. John is on the left, standing; and a little angel is seated on the step of the pedestal playing a lute and singing.

"Mary is a beauteous maiden, about eighteen years of age, and her fair face, chaste as a lily, evinces the tenderest and devoutest affection. Absorbed in the contemplation of the Infant, whom she presses to her bosom with her left arm, nothing distracts her from that dear object, on which she seems to feast her eyes. The beauteous Infant, though playful, and apparently indifferent to all things around him, clearly shows that He is conscious of His divinity, for a living light flashes from His eyes, and in His whole bearing there is a repose and contentment such as might be fancied to be peculiar to the Son of God, who is beatitude itself. One of the two nude angels who suspend the crown over the Virgin's head, the one on her left, is poised in the air, and seems intent on his function; whilst his companion descending a little, sustains the crown with his left hand, and looks at S. Stephen, who is under him, as though he were afraid to hurt him with his tiny feet. Each of them holds in the hand not engaged with the crown, a saffron-coloured veil, which, drawn through their fingers, falls in graceful folds, and heightens the beauty of the flying angels, and breaks the mass of air about the countenance of the Madonna. S. Stephen is represented as a young and delicate priest. His face is in profile, and he tenderly contemplates the incomprehensible humility of the Infant Jesus. And oh, how surpassingly beautiful is his expression whilst he holds out the palm-branch—the emblem of his martyrdom—and thanks the Divine Infant for having chosen him to be the foremost of the bleeding band! S. John's aspect is handsome, but somewhat

emaciated—perhaps the painter had been thinking of th
'Voice crying in the wilderness.' His face is almo
entirely visible, and is inflamed by that holy fire th
inwardly consumes him, whilst, his cavernous an
flashing eyes reveal the intensity of the fire that burn
in his soul. In his left hand he carries the accustome
long, slender cross, while, with his right, he points to th
Infant, who is the object of his profound meditations."
remains for us to speak of the angel sitting at the foot
the pedestal, who touches the lute whilst a celestial stra
seems to flow from his lips. The attitude of this de
creature is beautiful: the left leg is contracted and th
right extended. He is partly nude and partly clothe
with a little tunic, over which is thrown a veil of fine
texture, that seems almost to move. Like one thorough
master of his instrument, his eye is not on it, while h
strikes the string, and, ravished in ecstacy, chants th
praises of the Lord. It is utterly impossible to descri
this as it deserves. Where every thing in this pictu
is beautiful, this angel is the most beautiful of a
Truly then may we exclaim with Mazzarosa, "Oh, what
beautiful picture is this for unity of thought, harmony
composition, brilliancy and variety of colouring, for fir
ness of expression, for its draperies, for correctness
design, for relief—in a word, for all that constitutes
eminent artist. Here Porta has shown himself not on
worthy of the friendship of Raffaello, but worthy to
his rival."[1]

It would appear, that the painter looked on this wor
as, in every respect, calculated to preserve his memor

[1] This picture has been engraved by Samuele jesi di Coreggio, and m
recently by the Saxon engraver, Maurice Steinle. A little design made
Fra Bartol. (with a pen,) of the same subject, is now in the Gallery of
Uffizj in Florence.

for he inscribed his name on the step, on which the angel is seated, playing the lute. *Fratris Bartholomei Florentini Ordinis Prædicatorum*, 1509. Vasari has dismissed this picture, with a few words; whereas, he should have given it distinguished mention.

All these works, had now shed such lustre on the name of Fra Bartolommeo, that Pier Soderini Gonfalonier, of Florence, not being able to get Lionardo da Vinci or Michelangiolo, to paint the hall of the Council, as the cartoons had never been coloured, addressed himself to our Friar, who was then the foremost man in the city, beseeching him to decorate that august seat of the chief magistracy. He, therefore, engaged him to paint a great picture—not representing a battle, or any passage in the profane history of his country; on the contrary, selecting a subject, congenial to the ideas of the Friar, he charged him to paint the portraits of all the Sainted Protectors of Florence, doing homage to the great Queen of Heaven. Though Vasari says, that this picture was commenced in the last days of Fra Bartolommeo, we have authentic documents to prove, that he executed it at the period of his partnership with Mariotto Albertinelli; one of these documents plainly stating at the time of their separation, that "the great picture for the hall of the Council, designed by the hand of Fra Bartolommeo, shall belong to the Friars."[1] Father Girolamo Dandi Gini in the oft-quoted Registry of the Convent of San Marco, under date, June 17, 1513, acknowledges to have received one hundred ducats from the Signory of Florence, on account of said picture;[2] which, if commenced in 1512, the epoch of the dissolution of the partnership, would lead us to

[1] Miscellanea, No. 2, loc. cit. [2] See Document.

believe, that the Friar had been commissioned to execut
it about 1511, that is, six years before the period state
by Vasari; but the honor of decorating the great ha
of the Council, was reserved for Vasari himself, wh
frescoed it from ceiling to pavement with histories. C
Porta's picture, we will speak more copiously at th
conclusion of this life. But whosoever would invest
gate, why Fra Bartolommeo, after receiving part of th
price of said picture, did not perfect it during the si
years that he survived, must find it difficult to get
satisfactory answer.

The other paintings, executed during the partnershi
with Albertinelli, are the following:—A Nativity, value
at two ducats—A Christ, carrying the Cross, of th
same value—An Annunciation, sold to the Gonfalonie
of Florence, for six ducats—A picture (subject un
known), which is described as "designed by Fr
Bartolommeo, for the Certosa of Pavia, like one b
Filippo (perhaps, Filippo Lippi), concerning which
find the following record, by the Syndic of San Marc
"A.D. 1511, from our Fra Bartolommeo and Mariott
painters, July 3, twelve golden ducats, paid by th
Certosa of Pavia, for paintings executed for that brothe
hood." In the margin, I find the cypher 34: it woul
appear, that this picture was the work of them both
that is to say, Fra Bartolommeo designed, and Mariott
coloured it. Susbequently, there is mention of a pi
ture, which was removed to Flanders; but though th
subject is not told, its dimensions give us to understan
that it was a work of great importance. There are tw
records of it: one, dated 1511, in which the Syndi
acknowledges to have received "from Mr. Ferrin, a
Englishman, twenty gold ducats, paid into the hands
Fra Bartolommeo, being the half of forty ducats, given t

him and Mariotto, as an instalment for the work, which he commissioned them to execute, and which they had arranged between them."[1] This, too, leads us to believe, that they both worked conjointly at this picture. The second memorandum is found in the same place, dated 29th November, A.D. 1512, where we read, that the Syndic had received "one hundred and forty ducats from Fra Bartolommeo, being one portion of the second instalment paid by Ferrino, for the picture which is destined for Flanders. There is no mention of this work in Vasari. Antecedently to all these, and perhaps entirely designed and coloured by Fra Bartolommeo, is a picture, not enumerated amongst these which were divided at the time of the dissolution of the partnership, there being no other mention of it than that made by the Syndic of San Marco, under date, November 2nd, 1510, as follows:[2]—"Received from Guiliano da Gagliano, on account of a picture painted for him by our Fra Bartolommeo, seventy ducats; 14th January, 1511. From Fra Bartolommeo for the picture executed for Giuliano da Gagliano, eighty-four ducats." This gives us the large sum of one hundred and fifty-four ducats, from which we may conclude that the work was one of great superficies and long labour.

Finally, come two other pictures. The first is that in the church of S. Catherine, at Pisa, now belonging to the Order of Preachers. It represents the B. V. M. with her Son in her arms, seated on an embasement, like that in the cathedral of Lucca, and the action is between repose and motion. It is a figure full of life, admirably designed, and beautifully draped. The naked Infant at her breast, in the act of blessing, is one of the most beau-

[1] Vasari does not mention it.

[2] Miscel. loc. cit.

tiful children painted by Porta. The two figures of
Peter and S. Paul, between whom the Virgin is place
are almost life-size; and, I would venture to say, that
far as design is concerned, they surpass those which Por
executed in Rome for Fra Mariano Fetti. As I saw t
picture in a bad light, I will not speak of its colourin
but, despite the injuries it sustained from the fire th
dstroyed a great part of this church in the seventeen
century, it appears to me to be robust and harmonio
to say nothing of the relief, which is admirable. T
embasement, on which the Virgin is seated, bears da
1511. I think that the following notice by the Synd
of the convent, relates to this work. It is dated Octob
3rd, of the same year. . . . "From our Bartolo
meo and his partner, Mariotto, October 3rd, seven gc
florins, being an instalment of thirty ducats, which th
got for the picture at Pisa . . . belonging to Miche
Mastiani." I am assured that the chapel in whi
this picture is, belonged to the Mastiani fami
This seems to have been the conjoint work of t
two partners. The second was also confided to F
Bartolommeo, by Averardo Salviati; and it is in
probability the same that Vasari says was executed
our friar in his youth, after he had left Cosimo Rosse
and established himself in his own habitation near t
Roman Gate. It may be, however, that he painted
similar one for the same Salviati at this period. The or
record of this occurs in the memoranda of the Syndic
the convent.

These are the principal works executed by Fra Bar
lommeo during his partnership with Mariotto Albertine
which partnership lasted about three years. Final
January 5, 1512, after Santi Pagnini had been ag
elected Prior of the convent of San Marco, the partn

ıip was dissolved, and they proceeded to divide the ıonies earned by their works, as well as the pictures ıemselves, and the other necessaries pertaining to the ·t. After deducting all expenses, the two painters ıvided between them the sum of 424 ducats. The aintings of which Fra Bartolommeo retained possession, ·e the following:—A God the Father, with S. Catherine, nd S. Mary Magdalene—the great picture designed for ıe hall of the Council—an Annunciation; a Christ carving the Cross; a head of Our Lord, given by the eligious to Lionardo Bartolini, together with some minor orks. Mariotti Albertinelli, who had drawn the deed of issolution, retained a picture by Filippo, (probably ippi), over and above the sum received for the copy of it, xecuted for the Certosa of Pavia; and a little sketch by ra Bartolommeo, representing Adam and Eve. Finally, lariotto added the following clause:—"It is agreed, ıoreover, that the necessaries which have been hitherto sed by us both, shall remain in the hands of Fra artolommeo during his life time; and, after his death, aid necessaries shall devolve on Mariotto Albertinelli nd his heirs; that is to say, a model (life-size) in wood, nd also another model on hinges; a pair of iron (uninelligible) . . . . and the model of an infant in laster, made by Sca di Desiderio (perhaps Desiderio da ettignano, a disciple of Donatello.)[1]

This Registry informs us of a number of paintings y Fra Bartolommeo, of which there is no mention made y the historians of Art. It was probably at this period 1512) that Mariotto Albertinelli took the strange notion f abandoning pencil, palette, and easel, for a pursuit more ongenial to his whimsical tastes.

[1] V. Document.

"Mariotto," says Vasari, "was a man of restless ch
racter, a lover of the table, and addicted to the pleasur
of life. It thus happened that the laborious minut
and racking of brain attendant on the study and exerc
of Art, became insufferable to him. He had frequent
been not a little mortified also, by the tongues of h
brother artists, who tormented him, as their custom
and always has been, the habit descending from one
another by inheritance, and being maintained
perpetual activity. He determined, therefore, to adc
a calling, which if less elevated, would be also le
fatiguing, and much more cheerful. Our artist, accor
ingly, opened a very handsome hotel, the house bei
one of these outside the gate of San Gallo: but n
content with this, he likewise established a tavern a
eating-house, at the Drago, near the Ponte Vecchio.
these places he performed the duties of host, duri
several months, affirming that he had chosen a professi
wherein there was no embarrassment with perspecti
freshortenings, or muscles, and what was still more,
criticism or censure to dread; whereas, that which
had abandoned was beset, on the contrary, with all th
disadvantages. The object of the calling he had le
Mariotto would remark, was to *imitate* flesh and blo
whereas, that which he had adopted, *made* both blo
and flesh. Here, again, as he declared, he found hims
daily receiving praises for his good wine; while in
old occupation, he was perpetually criticised, and hou
compelled to listen to the blame bestowed on his p
formances."[1] I cannot say that that was really his i
of art; but I am quite certain that a more crack-brain

[1] See Vasari's Life of Mar. Alb., translated by Mrs. Jonathan Fos
(Bohn's ed.)

inter never handled brush, in Florence. He subse-
ently resumed his pencil, but he never reached that
rfection to which the genius and examples of Fra
artolommeo were calculated to conduct him.

CHAPTER V.

a Bartolommeo della Porta adheres still more closely to the method of the Venetians—Perfections and Imperfections of this new manner—Paintings that belong to it.

the reader has attended seriously to what we have
en narrating, he must have perceived that the
rsatile genius of Porta was ever striving to pourtray a
auty that seemed to elude him; and, that never satisfied
ith any single method, he laboured assiduously to per-
et himself in many. To him the Beautiful was like a
rio-coloured iris, alternately revealing such diver-
y of brilliant and fascinating tints, that he found
difficult to determine which of them was the most
accful, or which he ought to copy. Such was truly
e fact with regard to this painter. He imitated Vinci,
all but equalled Raffaello, he rivalled the Venetians;
d, although always producing marvellous paintings,
was still dissatisfied with himself, just as if his
ncil had failed to realise his exquisite ideal. The
her painters of this century adopted two or three dif-
rent manners of colouring; but Porta added a fourth.
this respect he resembled Raffaello who, in his youth,
llowed the traces of Pietro Perugino, and in his later
riods imitated both Porta and Buonarrotti.

Disengaged from Mariotto Albertinelli, Fra Bart lommeo undertook to paint some very large pictures. which, if I do not err, there appears a stronger developm of the method adopted by Lionardo da Vinci, and t Venetians. The latter having now triumphed over the other schools of Italy in colouring and chiaroscu heightened, if I be allowed to say so, their pomp a ostentation of art. Hence, it not unfrequently occ that the grounds of their paintings are so darkened shading as to make the objects they effigied see floating before us in deepest night. This they practis in order to obtain the highest relief of which art is cap ble; till, at length, finding the ordinary tints inadequa to their object, they began to employ the black colo produced from burnt ivory, nay, and printer's smoke, the great detriment of art and their own works. Such course as this, adopted by Fra Bartolommeo, by Polidd da Caravaggio, nay, and sometimes even by Raffae himself, did irreparable injury to their paintings;[1] much so, that, in many of Porta's productions we c now barely recognise the figures on their dark and ov shaded grounds. I will now notice the two gre paintings produced by Fra Bartolommeo under t *tenebrose* influence, for his Church of San Marco, p promising that one of them has passed into the Palat gallery. They both represent the Virgin seated o throne, surrounded by many Saints, and, in my jud ment, they determine the period when this painter ab doned the antique for the modern manner. We ha already remarked how the school of Giotto was w

[1] This caused great injury to Da Vinci's "Supper," in the refectory (F Grazie), at Milan; and also to Raffaello's Transfiguration in Rome. Al the beginning of the seventeenth century this error gave rise to the fanat sect known as the "Tenebrosi."—See Lanzi's History of Painting, vol. 3.

observe extreme simplicity in such compositions; for
y held it as an axiom that a variety of accessories
st necessarily distract the eye from the principal sub-
t; hence their figures were very few, and so disposed that
y could not lessen the worship and veneration bestowed
the chief object. In the fifteenth century the artists
gan to give a certain unity of idea to their composi-
ns, and although not possessing the symmetrical uni-
nity of the Giottesque, which is not always pleasing
the eye, they do not cause that confusion and distrac-
n invariably resulting from an overcrowded multitude.
us the eye is satisfied without lessening the religious
et; and our Friar gave such evidence of this happy man-
ement in the two pictures at Lucca, already mentioned,
t they can bear comparison with these of the most
stened artists. But in these two paintings he seems
have laboured to elevate himself to the rich and gran-
se compositions, that were so delightful to that cen-
y and the following: and in which the Venetians,
l Paolo Cagliari particularly, have won the greatest
own. We will speak of these two works in the
rds of Vasari, as we are not able to describe them
h greater truth or elegance. Mentioning the great
ture which was subsequently removed to the Pitti
lace, he thus expresses himself:—"The Virgin, in
s work, is surrounded by numerous figures, all well
ecuted, graceful, full of expression, and highly
mated; they are coloured in so bold a manner, that
y would rather seem to be in relief, than parts of a
el surface; the master desiring to show, that he could
only draw, but give force, and add the fitting degree
shadow to his figures, and this he has amply effected
a canopy or pavilion, upheld by certain children, who
hovering in the air, and seem to come forth from the

picture. There is, also, a figure of Christ, as an Infan espousing the Nun, S. Catherine; the treatment is bo and free, nor is it possible to imagine anything mo life-like than this group: a circle of Saints, receding perspective on each side, disappears within the depth a large recess, and this train of figures is arranged wi so much ability, that they seem to be real. Before th principal figures in this picture, there is a San Giorg in armour, bearing a standard in his hand—an imposin powerful, and life-like figure, the attitude of which very fine. No less worthy of praise is the San Bart lommeo, standing upright in the same work; and equall excellent are two children seated, the one playing on lute, the other on a lyre; the first of these has his l raised and bent, he is supporting his instrument there and his fingers move the strings in the act of playin the ear is bent in rapt attention to the harmony; t head is turned upwards, and the mouth is slightly opene with so life-like an effect, that while looking at it, t spectator cannot persuade himself that he does not he the sound of the voice. The other child, leaning on o side, bends his ear to the lyre, and seems to be listeni intently, with the purpose of marking the degree of accord with the lute and voice: occupied with his effo to bring his instrument into harmony with that melo he has his eyes riveted on the ground, and turns the attentively towards his companion, who is singing a playing. All these varied expressions are rendered wi much ingenuity: the children are both sitting, as have said, and are clothed in veils, every part admirably executed by the able hand of Fra Bartolo meo, and the whole work comes out most harmoniou from its dark shadows." And, again; "It is obvi that in the colouring of this work, Bartolommeo h

sely imitated the paintings of Lionardo da Vinci, re particularly in the shadows, for which he has used nter's smoke, or black of burnt-ivory. These blacks ve caused the picture to darken greatly, they having stantly become deeper, so that the work is now much wier than it was when first painted."[1] Speaking of second picture, which is now in the church of San rco, he says:—"He, a short time after the completion this picture, painted another, which is also considered ood one; the subject is a Madonna, with Saints around . Fra Bartolommeo obtained much commendation his manner of drawing figures, which he did with h remarkable softness of outline, that he added to the by this means, a great increase of harmony; his ures really appear to be in relief, they are executed in most animated manner, and finished with the utmost fection." In these two pictures the virile heads are y noble, as is also that of the Virgin: the design is ste, and the draperies exquisite; but the colouring is bold, that when compared with the beautiful work in cathedral of Lucca, they seem as though they were duced by two artists. In fact, Baldinucci tells us t Pietro da Cortona, on seeing Bartolommeo's picture, v in the Pitti Palace, pronounced it to be the most utiful in all Florence;[2] and Mons. Bottari and Gio- ni Masselii add, that the same painter thought that one now in San Marco was executed by Raffaello.[3] vill finally observe, that if the first of these two ntings displays a wonderful mastery in art, the second, ich is more chaste, pleases me most of all. In the moirs of the convent of San Marco, under date,

[1] Vasari's Life of Fra Bartol.
[2] Decenn. X. del Secolo, iii., p. 2.
[3] Vasari. See Masselli's Notes. Lanzi, Hist. of Painting, Flor. Sch. ch 2.

February 3, 1534, we find that the painting now in t possession of the Friars, was presented to Giovan Maria, son of Nicolo Benintendi of Florence, in ho of S. Catherine, V. M., to whom both altar and pict were dedicated.[1] The memoranda of the sacristy of S Marco state, that the companion to this picture, wh was opposite to it in the same church dedicated to Catherine of Siena, was likewise given to Monsi Milanesi, a bishop, I know not of what diocese, A 1588; and that it was transferred in 1690 (the Sac Congregation of Rome consenting) to the apartment Prince Ferdinando, son of the Grand-Duke Cosimo I The prince caused a copy of it to be made for the r gious, by Anton. Domenico Gabbiani, in which manner of the friar is so happily imitated, that many a artists mistook it for the original.[2] In the Florent Academy of Design, there is another great painting Porta, the composition of which is very similar to t in the Pitti; but, like the picture of S. Bernard, retou ings have almost ruined it.

In the Siena gallery of design there are two v beautiful little works, dated 1512; and they seem to portions of a very large work. One of them repres S. Catherine, V. M., and the other S. Mary Magdal When I saw them in October, 1841, they greatly ple me; the figures and attidudes being most graceful. colouring, though it has sustained injury, is sweet harmonious; and they both possess a certain deli that reminds us of Raffaello and Vinci. On the w (the engine of Martyrdom) we find the date 1512.[3]

[1] See Document.

[2] F. Guglielmo della Valle's Notes to Vasari. Borghini was wron attributing it to Francesco Petrucci.

[3] It is commonly thought that these two paintings were brought fro Dominican Convent of Santo Spirito, in Siena.

There are two other works by Porta, concerning the
tes of which I have been always dubious, but it is
eiy that they belong to this period of his artistic
eer, when blending the style of three different schools,
produced such marvellous master-pieces; I mean the
o pictures now in the Pitti Gallery. The first and
allest in dimensions is a Holy Family; it is composed
as:—the Virgin is seated with the Divine Infant
ude) in her arms, and a little S. John playfully pre-
nts Him with fruits and flowers, that he has in his
ment of camel's hair. The Infant embraces him for
offering. S. Anne, who is on the Virgin's right, holds
little cross of S. John, whilst S. Joseph is reclining
a sack (just as Andrea del Sarto has painted him in the
ister of the Church of the Annunciation) and allows
to see only a part of his face. They all amorously con-
mplate the interchange of infantine embraces, and have
ir eyes riveted on these two dear children. There is
heart so savage that must not be touched at sight of
h a scene. Here is infancy luxuriating in the short-
ed and ineffable joys, that beam on the spring-time of
; whilst dear and loving kinsfolk, sharing them for the
tant, seem to forget all the bitter trials of mature years.
is work, far more clearly than any other, reveals the
der and affectionate soul of Porta. Perhaps this was a
niniscence of the picture which is believed to have been
mmenced by the friar, and finished by Raffaello, called
Madonna del Cappuccino, of which we have spoken.
r do I think that the picture now in the Pitti belongs
the period in which these two artists first associated, as
outlines of the nude in both the children are some-
at exaggerated, and give evidence of the change which
friar introduced into his latest manner.

But we will now proceed to describe the second

picture—the Deposition from the Cross. A woe-begc mother leans over the lifeless remains of her Son, s porting His head with her right hand, whilst her left h His arm. Her eyes, exhausted with weeping, have tears; and she rivets them on the dead form, as though were striving to recognise the loved features of her S Alas! how changed by cruel death! John, the belo disciple, raises the dead body on his knee, and with b his arms approximates it to the Virgin's bosom. All grief is in his innermost heart; and his countena evidences a certain terror and pity, indicating ho of the tremendous deed. Magdalene throws herself the feet of her beloved Master, and affectionately bat them with her tears, and embraces them. Nothing be more exquisite than the nude of the Redeemer, w is laid on a block of stone, covered with a white clo and it is so admirably coloured that it may be pronoun in every respect, perfect. I do not hesitate to say, t this work is worthy a place beside the two in Lu for it is the third in the order of merit. The groun the picture has no perspective, but is all covered wit heavy shading subsequently added, and which cancel perhaps, the two figures of S. Peter and S. Paul, were distinctly visible in the time of Bocchi.[1]

The learned have raised a controversy concerning work, which we will notice briefly. Vasari, at the be ning of Bartolommeo's life, writes, "In San Gall commenced a picture, which was afterwards finished Giuliano Bugiardini, and is now on the altar of Jacopo-tra-Fossi, at the corner of the Alberti." In

[1] Le Bellezze della città di Firenze, scritte da Bocchi, ed accresci Gio. Cinelli. When Andrea del Sarto undertook to paint a Deposit the Camaldulese Monks of San Pier a Luco del Mugello, he designed S. and S. Paul in the same manner.

'e, however, of the painter Bugiardini, he thus expresses
mself:—"Mariotto Albertinelli having seen these and
her works by Giuliano, and knowing that he did not
'viate a hair's-breadth from the designs before him, as
'on as he determined to abandon the art, commissioned
m to finish a painting which his friend and companion,
ra Bartolommeo, had left designed and shaded in water-
'lours, as was his custom. Giuliano, therefore, set to
ork, and with great diligence and labour executed this
eture, that was afterwards placed in the church of San
allo, outside the gate . . . and finally in San
acopo-tra-Fossi, at the corner of the Alberti, where it is
present on the high altar; this picture represents the
ead Christ, Magdalene embracing His feet, and S. John
e Evangelist, who holds His head and supports Him
1 one knee: there is also S. Peter weeping, and S. Paul
ho, with extended arms, contemplates his Lord lying
ead.'" Let us now see whether the Deposition from the
ross, by Fra Bartolommeo, actually in the Pitti palace,
the very one which Vasari describes in one place as
ished, and in another as *coloured*, by Giuliano Bugiar-
ni; for we may here state that Porta very often repeated
e same subject. Moreover, let it be remembered that
e authority of Bocchi and Masselli would establish its
entity with that work. It may be objected, that here
e have not the two figures of S. Peter and S. Paul,
d only that of the Virgin, of which Vasari is silent.
ut we have already observed, that the figures of the
postles were covered with a heavy colouring at the
ne the picture was restored; and the fact of there being

[1] Vasari, Loc. Cit. We may conjecture that this unfinished picture fell
the lot of Mariotto Albertinelli, at the dissolution of the partnership, even
ough it be not mentioned in the syndic's catalogue. The Deposition in the
tti has been engraved by Steinle.

a figure unnoticed by Vasari is a still more convinci proof of the imperfection of the historian's memo Neither would it be reasonable to suppose that such a v perfect painting was the work of two artists; and v therefore, agree with Rosini, who says, "The Depositi by Fra Bartolommeo, excels in colouring the other f pictures by him, which are in the Pitti Gallery. The fore, Bugiardini, an exact yet mediocre painter, co not have coloured the Deposition more beautifully t Fra Bartolommeo coloured the S. Mark, the Jesus Ris the Enthroned Virgin, and the Holy Family; and t was that Fra Bartolommeo who, according to Vasari, very competent judge of the Artistic works of oth gave such graceful colouring to his figures. Now, w will believe that Bugiardini excelled him in this p ticular?" Masselli and Rosini, therefore, are of opin that the two figures of S. Peter and S. Paul were finish or coloured by Bugiardini, and that being imperfect very mediocre, they were cancelled when the paint was undergoing restoration.[1] We very readily subscr this opinion.

We will now speak of the Abduction of Dina, wh being left unfinished by Fra Bartolommeo, was perfec by Bugiardini, and gave rise to a controversy analog to the former.[2] "Another work," says Vasari, "be

[1] Siepi. Descrizione Trop. Ist. della città di Perugia, vol. 2, p. 447. the Palace of the Penna there is a picture by Fra Bartol. representing C lying dead on His Mother's bosom: the Virgin has an Apostle on either of her. In the choir of San Domenico, at Prato, is a copy of the Depo in the Pitti. In this work, which I take to have been executed by Paolino da Pistoja, the two figures of S. Peter and S. Paul are very ferently coloured. Niccolo Antinori possesses another very beautiful c which looks like an original. I think, however, that it belongs to the teenth century; it has not the two figures of the Apostles. I am told there is in Val-d'Elsa, another Deposition by Fra Bartol. very like the in the Pitti.

[2] *I. E.* The Deposition mentioned in p. 77.

the same master, representing the Abduction of Dina. is subsequently *coloured* by the same Giuliano; there e in this picture certain buildings," etc. In the life Bugiardini, however, instead of saying that this cture was *coloured*, he asserts that it was finished by iuliano, adding, that he made a copy of it, which was ought to France. Masselli, in a note to this passage of ra Bartolommeo's life, being led into error by Vasari, firms, that Bugiardini did not *finish*, but simply made copy of the Abduction by the friar.[1] A document ought to light by Gaye, removes all doubt concerning e work in question. This is a letter from Paolo Mini Bartolommeo Valori, dated Florence, October 8, 1531. numerating some works of art executed about that riod in Florence, he says, "Bugiardini has finished beautiful work designed by the friar of San Marco; id Michelangiolo is never tired of praising it. It is e history of Dina, taken from the Old Testament . . . . any prince might be proud of it; and if the uke of Albania knew of it, he would not lose it at any ice. It is not finished."[2] This clearly proves what nd Giuliano had in the picture, and confirms the uthority of Vasari. The memoirs of the convent of n Marco do not mention this work; but Masselli tells that Ranieri, for whom it was executed, sold it to the shop of Ricasoli; and that it was purchased in the last ntury by Ignatius Hugford, the painter. At his death was sold to Mr. Smith, the English Consul, at Venice, id it is now, probably, in England.

Having given these notices of the life as well as works Porta, and particularly of these which irrefragable uthority or valid conjectures attribute to this period of

[1] Masselli. Rosini Storia della Pitt. [2] Loc. cit.

his artistic career, we will close the present chapter wi
a deliberation of the Dominican Fathers of San Marc
which may have been greatly influenced by our paint

In April, 1512, the celebrated Father Pagnini,
devoted patron of the fine arts, being again superi
of San Marco, the religious, influenced, mayhap, by F
Bartolommeo, determined to renew the ancient chur
of San Marco, which still retained its old gothic desig
as may be seen by the little choir, the only remains
the primitive edifice now standing. As there were so
fathers of the Tuscan convents then in Florence, at t
general chapter Pagnini brought them together to ta
counsel with them on the 27th day of said month a
year. He there developed his project, and proposed as t
architect, Baccio d'Agnolo, the same who, with Cronac
had directed the works in the Council-Hall of the Republ
during the times of Savonarola, and who had construct
the stairs to the cupola of the cathedral of Florence.
order to meet the expense, he suggested that the jus
tronatus of some of the chapels should be given to a c
tain number of the citizens, on condition that they wou
contribute to the undertaking. The project was una
mously approved, and ten of the fathers subscribed
and Baccio d'Agnolo was declared the architect. T
act of the council, however, was followed by anoth
passed by the Definitory of the chapter of San Ma
adjourning all further proceedings till the new gen
assembly met, which was to decide or finally reject
contemplated alterations.[1] Alarmed at the heavy
pense, and still in debt for the new noviciate recen
erected, they thought no more of the church, wh
interior was remodelled in 1580, after the designs of

[1] Ricordanze, B

elebrated sculptor and architect, Gian di Bologna. This re-construction caused the ruin of the frescoes by Pietro Cavallini and Lorenzo di Bicci, which had so long beautified the walls of the ancient edifice. Of all Cavallini's works, none, save a beautiful Annunciation, escaped the destructive tools of these Vandals. Neither Pagnini nor Fra Bartolommeo would have tolerated this ever-to-be-lamented demolition.[1]

CHAPTER VI.

Fra Bartolommeo in Rome—Who was Fra Mariano Fetti, for whom this painter executed two large pictures—He begins to follow Michelangiolo Buonarroti—He returns to Florence—Paintings in this fourth and last manner.

Whilst the Friar of San Marco was producing these marvellous works, that young painter of Urbino, who, in 1506, was his disciple in colouring, rose to such an altitude in the estimation of all artists, that he actually disputed with Michelangiolo the supremacy in painting; so much so, that the studious of this art did not know which they should commend most—the exquisite beauties and celestial graces of Sanzio, or the sublime grandeur of Buonarroti. All, however, agreed that if it were not allowed to institute comparison between them, it was

[1] Father Giuseppe Richa, a learned man, though not very conversant with painting, writes of said demolition:—"Gian Bologna having removed many of the old frescoes, by Pietro Cavallini, which rather created confusion than added to the beauty of the church, reduced it to its present condition by building six chapels on either side." Notizie Istor. delle Chiese di Firenze. Vasari also caused the destruction of some fine frescoes by Massaccio, the Angelico, and others. Vasari and Gian Bologna, though the most renowned artists of their period, are inexcusable for this barbarism.

only just to entitle them both supreme and unapproachable masters. Every artist in Florence burned with a desire to set out for Rome, there to behold the works of these magnificent geniuses, and to profit by their productions; and Porta, too, longed to stand within the walls of the city of the Cæsars, not only to meet him who was heaven's privileged painter, but to embrace once more the friend and companion of his studies—the man who had initiated him in the secrets of perspective. Having obtained the necessary faculties from his superiors, the Friar set out for Rome in the year 1514; proceeding through Siena and Viterbo. It appears indubitable that he tarried some time in the convent of S. Maria della Quercia, near the latter city, and, at the request of the monks, commenced two pictures, finishing one and leaving the other imperfect. The subject of the first was our Lord Risen appearing to Mary Magdalene as the gardener. The second was the B. V. M., surrounded by saints of the Dominican Order—a work of very large dimensions which he merely designed. Vasari says that Mariotto Albertinelli commenced a painting for S. Maria della Quercia, and that he left it unfinished, as he had made up his mind to go to Rome. He does not state what the subject of this painting was; but in the life of Jacopo Portormo, as though forgetful of what he had written in that of Mariotto, he adds: "Not long after Mariotto had left Florence—(after Raffaello's arrival in said city)—for Viterbo, in order to work at the picture that Fra Bartolommeo had commenced." These words, we need hardly say, leave us in doubt as to whether Vasari speaks of one or of two different pictures. Neither should we omit remarking that he confounds the chronological order of the life of these painters; since it is impossible to suppose that Fra Bartolommeo would have left Florence for

Viterbo, during Raffaello's sojourn within the walls of the modern Athens; or that Mariotto set out in 1514. The memoirs of the Convent della Quercia state the very contrary, and inform us that the picture which Porta left unfinished was perfected by Fra Paolino di Pistoja.

When Fra Bartolommeo arrived in Rome, Leo X. had just ascended the Pontifical throne; Raffaello was painting in the Vatican the histories of Attila and the imprisonment of S. Peter; and Michelangiolo was modelling or sculpturing the statue of Moses, for the tomb of Julius II.; whilst Fra Giocondo, with Giuliano, supplied the place of Bramante, in building the basilica sacred to the Prince of the Apostles. The Pontiff, most certainly, was not ignorant of the name and fame of the painter of San Marco, for we have already stated that our friars had presented him with some of his works; and Vasari writes that Fra Bartolommeo "*had executed some paintings for Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici.*" Nevertheless, he did not find a Macænas in the Pontiff, but in the person of a very singular man, whom we must needs make known to our readers. This was Fra Mariano Fetti, a lay brother of the convent of San Marco. Having received the Dominican habit from Fra Gerolamo Savonarola, he was a spectator of the direful tragedy which closed the career of the Republican Friar. As soon as Fra Gerolamo's partisans were dispersed or murdered by the oligarchs, this lay-brother began to flatter and fawn on the Medici. Being a facetious character and an interminable charlatan, he secured the favour of Cardinal Giovanni dei Medici, who, as soon as he ascended the Pontifical throne, brought to his court this Florentine lay-brother, who was far better entitled to the name of Fra *Carnevale*, than was the religious artist Corradini. I wonder if, during the time he was performing the *role* of court-jester to Leo X., he ever

called to mind the calamitous 23rd of May, 1498! It would appear, however, that he regarded his novel occupation as in every respect disgraceful to the habit which he received at the hands of the rigid reformer, and he therefore unfrocked himself to enter another Order, certainly not less venerable.[1] As the reward of his witticisms he asked and obtained the convent of San Silvestro on Monte Cavallo, for his Congregation of Tuscany. He then besought the Pontiff to appoint him a monk of the signet, and his prayer was accordingly granted, although

[1] All European sovereigns of this period retained jesters in their courts and what wonder if Leo X. did the like? The supper hour was the time appointed for these amusing folk to assemble, and the Translator extracts the following notices (brief though they be) of the jesters mentioned in the text from F. Tiraboschi's "Storia della Letteratura Italiana." Querno, who was a native of the kingdom of Naples, was a mere pedant and a very bad improvisatore in Latin. The Pontiff ordered him into his presence each evening when he was at supper, and permitted him to drink out of his own glass, on condition that he recited Latin verses on a subject furnished by his Holiness himself, who occasionally rhymed. Querno, for example, began thus:—

"Archipoeta facit versus pro mille poetis;"

and the Pontiff rejoined,

"Et pro mille aliis Archipoeta *bibit*."

Then quoth Querno—

"Porrige, quod faciat mihi carmina docta Falernum."

And the Pope, alluding to the gout with which the crapulous Querno was afflicted, replied—

"Hoc etiam enervat, debilitatque pedes."

Baraballo was a native of Gaeta—(where the Constable Bourbon is buried and where Pius IX. took refuge after flying from Rome). He was a very indifferent rhymer, and the Romans of Leo's golden days did him the honour of a mock triumph. The elephant, however, which bore the very ludicrous person of Baraballo, 'spite of goads and cudgels, refused to carry his burden farther than the bridge of S. Angelo,—the sapient animal having reasoned himself into a belief that he should not take any part in profaning the Capitol where Petrarca received his laurels.—Fra Mariano Fetti took the Dominican habit in 1495, and died in that of the Cistercians, A.D., 1531. The Dominicans gave up the convent of San Silvestro to Paul III., as Clement VII. had aggregated S. Maria Sopra Minerva to the Tuscan Congregation.

Benvenuto Cellini[1] was refused this dignity. Let us here observe that this office was conferred on the most eminent artists, who subsequently took the Cistercian habit, and were called the brotherhood of the lead, because their duty was to append the signet (leaden) to the bulls and diplomas of the Popes. Amongst the artists whom Leo X. appointed, were Sebastiano Luciani, the Venetian painter, and Gerolamo Lombardi, the Milanese sculptor. When Fra Bartolommeo arrived in Rome, Fra Mariano Fetti, Baraballo, and Querno, to whom they gave the *sobriquet* of "Arch-Poet," were amusing the pontiff every evening during supper; and as it was necessary, in order to secure Leo's good-will, that all his courtiers should patronise the Arts, Fra Mariano followed the prevailing fashion, and invited Polidoro da Caravaggio, Baldassare Peruzzi, and Mariotto Albertinelli, to paint in the church of San Silvestro. Fra Bartolommeo had scarcely made his appearance, when Fetti declared himself his Macænas, and commissioned him to paint two great figures of S. Peter and S. Paul for his church on Monte Cavallo.

Porta's first act was to embrace Raffaello.[2] It is easy to conceive how these two friends met, and how warm were their greetings. Raffaello, no doubt, brought the

[1] Cellini, in his life, written by himself, states (chap. xi.) that a monk of the lead or signet was worth 800 gold crowns annually.

[2] Whilst these pages were going through the press (1849), a beautiful fresco by Raffaello was discovered in the suppressed monastery of S. Onofrio, in Via Faenza (Florence). It represents our Lord, with the Apostles, at the last supper: all the figures are life-size. The work is inscribed 1505. All this confirms what we have said concerning the period in which Raffaello studied colouring under our Friar. This was between 1506 and 1507; for the critics of Art do not here observe the signs of Raffaello's new and grandiose style. We are indebted to Zotti and Count Carlo della Porta for this discovery.

Friar of San Marco to behold all his paintings, and those that Giulio Romano and his other disciples were executing after his designs; and he showed him, as we may well suppose, the cartoons of those wondrous tapestries that were subsequently wrought in Flanders. How must now Porta's heart have thrilled at witnessing the rapid advances of him who had been his disciple in colouring! Incapable of harbouring a sentiment of envy, he must have lauded his purity in design, the elegance of his figures, and the sweet and tranquil harmony of his tintings, and all these perfections which shall consecrate the genius of Sanzio throughout all future ages. But what made the deepest impression on Porta's mind, was the number of ancient statues that Rome possessed. Michelangiolo, we may conjecture, conducted him to see a part of the monument to Julius the Second, at which he was then engaged; and these stupendous frescoes of Genesis and the Prophets which he had just then finished in the Sixtine. This, in all probability, was the first time he had ever seen any great work by Buonarroti, for the cartoons of the war of Pisa were not yet coloured. Placed between those two grand luminaries, the Friar did not know which of them he ought to select as his model. Sanzio sacrificed everything to the Graces, and Michelangiolo aspired to the *grandiose* and sublime. The former was educating a chosen band of youths, into whom he transfused all the suavity of his pencilling; "But Buonarotti," writes Pietro Giordani, "whose genius was haughty, desired rather to stand alone than be called the foremost man of his age, and disdaining to walk in the way already marked out, lost himself in new paths. The great man did not remember that Art needs science more for practical results than for mere pomp; and being deeply skilled in anatomy, he made a most ostenta-

ious parade of it. His grand aim seems always to have been to produce something transcending nature. The authority of his name induced many to follow him, whose minor intellects and inferior powers covered their attempts with shame."[1] Fra Bartolommeo, who had walked in the footprints of Lionardo, Raffaello, and the Venetians, struck with astonishment by the works of Michelangiolo, and seeing that Raffaello himself was rivalling this sovereign genius by the enlargement of his manner, determined to enter this arena where very few have come off triumphant, and where thousands have signally failed. And here we must dissent with Lanzi, who writes that Porta "having gone to Rome to see the works of Buonarroti and Raffaello, greatly elevated his style; but his manner was at all times more conformable to that of his friend than of his fellow-citizen, uniting dignity with grace in his heads and in his general design. The picture in the Pitti palace, which Pietro da Cortona imagined to be the work of Raffaello, is a proof of this, though the Friar painted it before he went to Rome."[2] Now, we will ask, how can the picture in the Pitti prove that he enlarged his manner after seeing the works in Rome, since it has been admitted that he produced this picture before he set out for that city? We will, therefore, bow to the authority of those who state, that it was in his last manner the Friar followed the precepts and examples of Michelangiolo. In this last period of his artistic career, Porta sometimes enlarges his outlines, even to exaggeration; and his draperies are not only bold, but partake of mannerism. Algarotti regards Porta as by no means elevated in the flesh of his vulgar male figures; but, on the con-

[1] Opere di Pietro Giordani.

[2] Lanzi's History of Painting, translated by Mr. Roscoe.

trary, rude. In this particular, the Caracci and Mengs pronounced the same opinion of Buonarroti. When could anything like this have been said of Raffaello and his followers? I think it is because they did not know the influence which the various schools of Italy exercised over Fra Bartolommeo, that this disparity of opinion has arisen amongst artists, who at one time term him graceful, and at another almost rude; but as soon as we shall have illustrated the four manners which he adopted successively, all these discrepancies shall be reconciled.

Compare the picture in the Cathedral of Lucca, or the God the Father blessing St. Catherine and S. Mary Magdalene, with that of the Christ Risen, now in the Pitti palace; and in these three works, that mark the beginning and termination of Porta's career, you will easily discover the imitation of Raffaello and Michelangiolo. In the first he appears to be truly noble and graceful; in the second, certainly *grandiose*, though somewhat ignoble. If his last manner is deprived of some perfections by its enlarged style, in my opinion his second and third excel it in elegance and simplicity. Moreover, the mild and devout soul of the painter was better adapted to that ingenuous manifestation of Art which characterises a genius which was naturally reposeful and tranquil. For my own part, whenever I see Michelangiolo's Moses, I at once recognize the fearless hand and soul of him who did not dread "*the great ire of the second;*"[1] but in the S. Mark by Fra Bartolommeo, I seek in vain for that trembling Baccio della Porta, who shuddered when the Arabbiati were thundering at the gates of the besieged convent.

His first essay, in the new style of Michelangiolo, were the two Apostles, that he undertook to colour for Fra

[1] Ariosto.

Mariano Fetti. I will merely speak of their design and composition, as I have seen only the cartoons which are preserved in Florence. These are about four braccia high. The two promulgators of the Gospel are in attitude and semblance venerable and majestic, as one could well fancy. In S. Peter there is great mildness, whilst the figure of S. Paul is characterised by great nobility. The former holds a parchment in his right hand, and a volume in his left. His attitude is calm; and with eyes raised to heaven, he seems to ask light and strength to preach to a corrupt people the austere and, to them, abhorrent law of the Cross. The S. Paul (not as S. Luke describes him in the Acts of the Apostles, of low stature and ignoble figure) is here represented as one whose whole person is bold and majestic—as one, whose flashing eyes and rapid action pronounce him to be a great orator, and a man despising death and chains. His right hand holds a sword, and its point, and his right foot, rest upon the embasement of an ancient column, as though the painter meant to depict the prostration of idolatry, and the overthrow of the fabulous deities of heathendom. His ample toga is, in every respect, such as suited a Roman citizen; and each of these figures is remarkable for the beauty of its drapery, though, in my opinion, it is inferior to that golden simplicity which distinguishes the two pictures in Lucca. Lanzi regarded the Florentine school as very miserable in the clothing of its figures, and praises the Caracci for their ample draperies. I do not approve these trains and other superfluities of robing that were so pleasing to the age and school of the Caracci, for if scantiness be odious, a useless overlaying of drapery is not less so: particularly when it weighs down, and envelops the whole person. In every other respect these two figures possess all that constitutes majesty and decorum. In both the design is correct, and the extremi-

ties are well outlined—the heads are life-like and speaking—but we cannot praise the non-natural attitude of S. Peter, who holds the volume in his left hand. Nobody can see these figures without recognising the new and enlarged style.[1] Bottari and Father Pungileoni write that the most distinguished artists in Rome took these two Apostles to be the work of Raffaello.

These two pictures were not yet finished, when Fra Bartolommeo took leave of his friends, and set out for Florence. The contemplation of the chef d'œuvres with which Rome abounded, produced the most marvellous impression on the soul of our Friar, "a circumstance which also happened to Andrea del Sarto, to Rosso, and to other truly eminent masters, whose modesty was equal to the confidence of innumerable artists of mediocrity who frequently enjoyed, at Rome, much ill-placed confidence."[2] Perhaps it was at this period that the germs o

[1] These two paintings were removed to the Quirinal. Father Serafino Guidotti, the Dominican painter, to whom we have alluded elsewhere, has furnished me with the following particulars regarding them, in a letter, dated June 23rd, 1845:—"I have seen the two Apostles, by Fra Bartolommeo, on Monte Cavallo. They are both all but destroyed, or miserably restored except the head of St. Peter, which is in good preservation. This is exceedingly well painted, and far better than the generality of Fra Bartolommeo's heads." These two works were engraved in outline by Garzoli, and published in the "Ape Italiana." The original cartoons are in the Florentine Academy of Design, and have been designed by A. Tricca and engraved by G. Ferri. The Syndic of the Convent of San Marco speaks of these pictures thus: "Item two pictures, of about four braccia in height, one of which represents S. Peter, and the other S. Paul, valued at XXX. ducats, but as the S. Peter is somewhat imperfect, I set him down at XV. ducats. These pictures were given to San Silvestro. Signor Tommaso Minardi assures me, that he saw in an old abatial church (now abandoned) near Rome, an unfinished fresco, by Fra Bartolommeo—'tis in a very ruinous state. Mayhap the Friar produced this during an excursion into the suburbs, for the sake of his health, which was then failing, and caused him to leave this, as well as the S. Peter, imperfect.

[2] History of Painting, by Lanzi. V. Bohn's Ed.

ne malady, which soon afterwards brought him down to he grave, were sowed; for after his return to Florence, is health was always variable, and his soul was overcast y the gloomiest thoughts. Having finished the figure f S. Paul, and left that of S. Peter imperfect, Fra Bartolommeo once more embraced Raffaello, whom he vas never to see again; and on expressing his regret at being obliged to leave the picture unfinished, Sanzio, who loved the Friar of San Marco as his friend, and enerated him as his master, kindly proposed to complete t, with his own hand, to which Porta gladly and thankfully consented. What could have been more kind than his offer of the divine Raffaello, who was then employed on so many and such important works?

Fra Bartolommeo's sojourn at Rome cannot have exceeded more than one or two months. Having reached Florence in the mid-summer of 1514, he fell sick; and we find him, early in July, in the hospice of the Dominicans in Pian di Mugnone, striving to regain his ost health. He had then with him two disciples, probably Fra Paolino and Fra Agostino, whom he caused, by way of indoctrinating them, to paint some histories of the holy Fathers, which no longer exist; and he himself, though very infirm, painted on the wall a Madonna, with the Infant in her arms, which still remains, and evidences his enlarged and new style.[1]

But, before describing the works executed by Porta n this fourth and last period of his pictorial career, we must needs throw some light on its characteristics and nature that we may be able to identify the paintings that belong to it, and ascend, if possible, to the general principles from which he seems to have derived his manner. If we accomplish this, it must serve

[1] V. See Document.

to illustrate the artistic history of this distinguished limner.

The great majority of the painters who flourished in the fifteenth century, had inherited from the Giotto-School and the Miniaturists, a certain fineness of execution in their paintings, which, on close inspection, exhibited the overwrought diligence and delicacy of miniatures. Nay, even design itself, evidenced the greatest timidity, as though it dreaded to overstep the confines of the true. Colouring, too, though highly toned and harmonious, had not as yet aspired to that illuding of the senses, by means of which the figures seem to move and detach themselves from the picture. Not to mention the other difficulties which Art had to encounter, as for example, foreshortening, and what painters term *sotto in su*, the latter were either ignorant or timid, and these characteristics are to be found in the very attitudes of their figures, which, according to custom, were always in a state of calm, and as reposeful in their action as in the expression of their features. But at the beginning of the sixteenth century, and in these that followed, painters determined to emancipate themselves from what they regarded as the slavery and harshness of the ancient masters. Wherefore they began to enlarge the outlines of their designs, and to show by the management of tendons and muscles, that they had studied anatomy with peculiar diligence. In colouring, too, they abandoned heavy shading for bold and masterly strokes of the pencil, which rendered the conception more energetic. In fact, they in some sort resembled these poets whose strains are rapidly written without heed to polished elegance. These paintings seen from a distance, have a boldness and originality that astonish

s.[1] Increasing the number of figures in their compo-
tions, they at last produced these overcrowded multitudes
hich generate confusion. But that which, most of all,
reprehensible in them, is the excessive mobility they
nparted to their figures, for they seem to be invariably
ancing, or tricked out in the style of theatrical declaim-
's. Hence, as they desired to accommodate the draperies
) the movement of the person they produced, those bi-
arre flutterings of vestments and veils, as though they
ere agitated by an impetuous storm. These defects, not
enerally visible till the middle of the sixteenth century,
egan to be so universally adopted, that they at last ori-
inated the impure and fanatic sect called Mannerists.
uch was the transition from servitude to licentiousness.
ut, as regards Fra Bartolommeo della Porta, I will
ankly declare what I believe to be the truth concerning
is last period of his artistic career, not affirming any-
iing dogmatically, but relying rather on simple investi-
ation and the opinions of better judges of Art. It appears
) me, then, that in his latest works, some few excepted, the
oldness and promptness of his hand degenerate into
rudeness of lines and tints. Strictly adhering to the true,
i his male figures particularly, he very rarely elevates him-
elf to the beau-ideal; whilst in proportions, he seems
) have enlarged even to exaggeration, and certainly, far
eyond the natural form. In fact, we may say of him
hat Quinctilian said of Zeuxis,[2] "that the man painted
y him exceeded in robustness and size of members the
rdinary man, in this respect following Homer, who re-
resents his men and women as giants and giantesses." I

[1] The same may be said of sculpture. See this subject more fully developed
Vasari, in his Life of Luca della Robbia.
[2] Institut. Orat, lib. xii. c. 10.

think, moreover, that the works of Michelangiolo, and these of the Greek and Latin sculptors in Rome, so influenced Porta, that we may trace evidences of the marbles and statues, as well in the movement as in the forms of his figures. These defects are in a great part compensated by the many beauties that are discernible in his latest paintings, which rival Paolo Veronese in fertility; whilst they dispute the palm with Tiziano Vecellio in the vigour of their tints, and with Michelangiolo in their grandiose style.

Once more in Florence, Fra Bartolommeo's first care was to perfect Fra Paolino del Signoraccio in painting, that he might thus bequeath a successor in art to his institute; and, in order to teach him design, and the management of light and shadows, he caused him to model in plaster, and for this purpose availed himself of the assistance of that renowned modeller Ambrogio della Robbia. Nothing could have been better than practice of this sort, then very usual amongst the Florentine artists, though sooth to say it has been neglected in our times. The Florentine painters, like all members of their profession, were not very remarkable for their charitable criticisms on each others performances; and they now began to whisper in their coteries that Fra Bartolommeo, though a very perfect colourist, was nowise capable of producing any good work in the nude; nay, that he excelled in the folds of his draperies, and covered all his figures with a superabundance of robes, in order to conceal this imperfection. Some went farther, and added, that he had neither art nor genius for large figures, albeit he had already painted figures of the natural size. These two accusations reveal the nature of the times: for, at that period, he alone was termed an able artist who best depicted naked members; and in all

is works followed the proportions of the ancient atues. Charges of this character, repeated in the fol-owing century, caused Gian Bologna to produce the elebrated group known as the Rape of the Sabines.[1] n fact, Donatello was wont to say, that the satirical ıvectives of his fellow-citizens did him more good than ıe acclamations and applause of the Venetians; as the ɔrmer stimulated him to perfect himself in art, whereas ıe latter would have stayed him on the way and caused im to think himself perfect. Porta's amour propre was ·ounded; and though at all times abhorring the nude, e nerved himself for the trial; and in order to prove how eeply learned he was in the study of the human body, e designed and coloured the holy Martyr S. Sebastian, aked. We will leave Vasari to describe it. "To this end e painted a S. Sebastian, wholly undraped, by way of spe-imen; the colouring of this figure is like that of the ving flesh, the countenance most beautiful, and in per-ect harmony with the beauty of the form; the whole ·ork, in short, is finished with exquisite delicacy, in so ıuch, that it obtained him infinite praise from the artists. . was said that when this painting was put up in the ıurch, the monks discovered from what they heard in ıe confessionals, that the grace and beauty of the vivid nitation of life, imparted to his work by the talents of 'ra Bartolommeo, had given occasion to the sin of light ıd evil thoughts; they consequently removed it from ıe church and placed it in the Chapter House, but it did ɔt remain there long, having been purchased by iovanni Battista della Palla, who sent it to the King of rance."[2] I believe that this work, though it did not

[1] Raffaello Borghini, Il Riposo.

[2] This Palla was the picture dealer mentioned by Vasari in his Life of ndrea del Sarto.

exceed the limits of decency, was subsequently a cause of remorse and shame to the good Friar. Certain it is that he never again painted a nude figure. The Memoirs of the covent of San Marco inform us that this picture was four and a half braccia high; and that besides the figure of the holy martyr, there was also that of a little angel; and that it was valued at only twenty ducats—an insignificant sum, verily, for such a work. Vasari assures us that this picture had no landscape, "but that he drew on the panel a niche in perspective, which has the appearance of being carved in relief, thus painting an ornament which served as a frame to the figure which he had executed in the middle of his work." And whosoever desires to learn the reason why he adopted these niches and painted cornices, will find it in the said biographer. "Fra Bartolommeo had often felt greatly displeased with the joiners who prepared the frames and external ornaments of his pictures, for these men had the custom then as they have now, of concealing one-eighth of the picture by the projection of their frames; he determined, therefore, to invent some contrivance by which he might be enabled to dispense with these frames altogether."[1] This was to paint a cornice round the picture, or some work of architecture, in the middle of which he placed the figure; and this was easy work for him who was so able in perspective, and it heightened the effect of the painting. For this reason he eschewed landscape, in which he was deeply skilled.[2]

[1] V. Mrs. Foster's Trans. of Vasari.

[2] For a long time no one knew what had become of the picture of S. Sebastian. M. Mariette fancied that it was actually in the possession of M. Thiers. But Signor Masselli has communicated to me the following particulars in a letter, dated June, 1848:—"M. Alaffre, of Toulouse, imagined that he possessed the S. Sebastian by Fra Bartol. as it was sent to France by

We answer the second accusation by pointing to the onderful picture of San Marco, the semi-colossal figure iat Lanzi terms a prodigy of art, and which holds the me place in painting that the Moses of Buonarrotti olds in sculpture. And, indeed, these two works semble each other so closely, that Porta must needs ive derived his inspiration from the Prophets in the Sis-ne, as well as from the gigantic statue of Moses. S. Mark seated within a niche which lends strong relief to the hole figure, so much so, that the eye can behold him most on every side. On his left knee he holds a book, which both his hands are extended, and he has a pen in s right hand. The figure is what may be termed ele-ated; and its attitude is between motion and repose. he expression of the countenance is not noble, but rather

ovanni della Palla. M. Alaffre, in an article inserted in the *Journal de ulouse*, June 17, 1844, gives us the following history of it:—"During the volution, and after the dilapidation of the churches, an unknown sold to father three paintings for forty-eight francs each. These three belonged one of the royal villas near Paris. The first represented Our Lord in the rden of Gethsemani; the second an Annunciation; and the third S. bastian. The last, the most beautiful of the three, is that which I possess, d which I attribute to Fra Bartolommeo." He then gives the reasons on ich he founds his opinion, which may be briefly summed in the follow-g:—The painting sent to Francis I. is not to be found in any museum, llery, or church in Paris. It is not mentioned by Filhiol or Reveil in ir vast repertories. The S. Sebastian, like the S. Mark, is painted in a he. The fact of its having been taken out of one of the royal residences, ves that it belonged to some oratory; and, finally, the description given the picture itself, confirms us in the belief that this now in Toulouse is original of Fra Bartol. The Saint is represented with his right hand sed to receive the palm of martyrdom from an angel who hovers over n. The head and arms of the celestial messenger appear from out the nted cornice. The saint supports himself on his left leg, and three arrows fixed on the left side of his body; one under the base of the neck, one on papilla of the breast, and one in the thigh. Both figures are nude, but aped as modesty requires.

bold than otherwise. He seems to have completed the work of an Evangelist, and to be preparing himself to perform that of an Apostle and Martyr, ready to seal his doctrine with his blood. So striking and life-like is this figure, that we can almost fancy we see it rising from the chair, in order to speak. Some have called it a Greek statue, transmuted into a painting, and for my own part, I recognise here more distinctly than in any other of Porta's works, his study of the ancient marbles.[1] Father Della Valle does not hesitate to affirm that the "S. Mark by Fra Bartolommeo need not dread Raffaello's Prophet in S. Augustin's at Rome." Moreover, here marks that "the attitude of the Evangelist is far more beautiful and terrible."[2] This great work was executed by the Friar, for the church of San Marco, and was placed over the entrance-door of the choir, when the choir was in the middle of the church. The Syndic of the convent marked it as valued at forty ducats; and when bought by Prince Ferdinand, if Richardson be correctly informed, it cost 4,800 crowns.[3] Carried to Paris at the period of the French invasion, it was restored to Italy at the general peace, and was transferred from the panel to canvas. The two paintings that we have mentioned were executed between the middle of 1514 and the beginning of 1515.

[1] It has been engraved by P. Lorenzini; but the best engraving of it is to be found in the work entitled "Galerie de Florence et du Palais Pitti, desinée par G. B. Wicar, Paris, 1789." The engravings given by Bardi in the Illustration of the Pitti Gallery, and by Rosini in his History of Painting, are only mediocre.

[2] See the edition of Vasari, published at Milan, v. viii., p. 263; and Father Della Valle, who states that there was a copy of it in S. Marco, painted by Francesco Petrucci. I believe that it is now in the Academy of Design.

[3] Vol. 3, Pt. 1, page 126. Father Della Valle, loc. cit., p. 271.

CHAPTER VII.

Fra Bartolommeo goes to Lucca, Pistoja and Prato—Paintings which he executed in these Cities—Returns to Florence at the time of the visit of Leo X.—His health failing, he is obliged to go again to Pian di Mugnone and Lecceto.

It very frequently happens, in our intercourse with society, nay, and in the perusal of history, that we are brought into contact with highly gifted geniuses who have so debased themselves by sordid pursuits, as to make us almost conclude, that not one, but two, different souls inform their bosoms—the one most noble, rapt in the contemplation of the True and Beautiful, walking abroad in the immensity of Heaven, and enamoured of its glories —the other abject, crawling like a loathsome reptile in slime, and battening on its impurities,—so much so, that you knew not whether you should abominate or compassionate those who have thus desecrated the choicest gifts of God. But wheresoever you discover a splendid intellect, domiciled in a holy breast, you must needs reverence and admire it, for it is the reflex, not of any merely human thing, but of divinity itself. But that I may not digress from my subject, I will here say, that much as I have admired the versatile genius, and wonderful art of Fra Giovanni Angelico, and Fra Bartolommeo, I have been much more fascinated by the examples which they gave to their contemporaries in a most corrupt age. Wherefore, having always regarded Porta, as a painter, second to very few, I have believed it to be my duty, not to

separate the artist from the citizen and the monk; and, although the ancient memoirs have left us in darkness as to Fra Bartolommeo's innermost life, I believe that Vasari has written enough to show the rare excellence of our painter's soul.

Naturally given to solemn and pious thoughts, Porta found, in the silence and seclusion of the cloister, that peace which is the fruit of virtue: nor is it easy for the mere worldling to imagine the arcane and ineffable delights which souls like his can find in this solitary peregrination of life. Such souls live not in the actual, but in the future, and the mortified senses are no longer able to check the spirit's flight into the sublime regions of intelligence and love. Enamoured of the Beautiful, and contemplating it in all its varied relations, the mind, nay, and even the heart, elevate themselves to the fountain source of all beauty, which is God. It was thus that Porta raised art to the sanctity of prayer; and like the Doctor of Aquino, who regarded the investigation of the True as a canticle of praise hymned to the Eternal, Fra Bartolommeo held the same opinion, respecting every imitation of the Beautiful. Thus, the artist's studio became a sanctuary; and painting, the language of angels. Often after finishing a picture of the Virgin, his soul was filled with the salutary thoughts of death; and then taking up his lute, he improvised some pious strain, and sang it to the accompaniment of his instrument.[1] At that period, the Florentines took great pleasure in spiritual canticles; and even the friars, during the hours of recreation, were wont to assemble and blend their

[1] Vasari says—"He finally arrived at the wished-for power of accompanying the labour of his hands, with the uninterrupted contemplation of death. . . . . On his return to Florence, he applied himself to music, and taking great delight in it; he sometimes sang for recreation."

voices in harmony. Thus, as we have already seen, did Fra Eustachio, the miniaturist, who charmed his confreres with the most beautiful episodes of the Divina Commedia; and such, also, was the practice of Fra Giovannino da Marcojano, who was wont to recite the most poetical passages of the Old and New Testament. Fra Bartolommeo was not unskilled in metrical composition, and we here give a specimen of his power It is the only one of the many devout emanations which must have gushed from the pious soul of this painter, and he traced it on the back of one of his designs:—

"Supreme, eternal source of sweetness, welling
Life, light, and solace, o'er this heart of mine;
Full well I feel, when close beside thee dwelling,
How joy itself, if thou wert not, must pine;
How heavenly hymns must sink to fiendish yelling;
How Life must never live, but still decline."[1]

These few verses are as valuable as one of his choicest pictures, and may be regarded as a perennial testimony of the piety of this worthy successor of the Angelico. Like the latter, Porta was very charitable, and nowise given to the love of lucre; hence, he delivered into the hands of his superiors such sums as he earned by the

[1] See Book 1st., chapters x. and xiii. of these Memoirs.

These verses, for the translation of which I am indebted to the Rev. J. Kenyon, P.P., Templederry, were first published by N. Tommaseo, in an illustration of a painting by the Angelico, inserted in the work that has been published by Antonio Perfetti. The following are the original:—

"Tutto sé dolce, Iddio supremo eterno,
Lume e conforto e vita del mio cuore;
Quando ben mi ti accosto, allor discerno
Che l'allegrezza è senza te dolore:
Se tu non fussi, il ciel sarebbe inferno
Quel che non vive teco sempre muore."

exercise of his genius, and was perfectly satisfied, provided he contributed to the sustentation of his brotherhood. In these days of licentiousness, when the great majority of the artists belonging to the religious orders cast off their habits, abandoned the cloister, and lived abroad in the tumult and uproar of the world; Fra Bartolommeo, even to his latest hour, was a zealous observer of the laws to which, like every other friar, he had bound himself by a solemn oath at the foot of the Altar. Many celebrated religious artists of whom we shall have occasion to speak, were as unlike him in this respect as day is unlike night!

Having paid this brief tribute to the memory of the pious cenobite, let us now continue to speak of him as a painter. It is very likely that Fra Bartolommeo set out early in 1515,[1] for Lucca, to visit his dear friend Santi Pagnini, who was then prior of the convent of San Romano.[2] It would appear that Pagnini, before completing the term of his priorate, was anxious that Porta should paint a great picture for this same church, which already possessed one of his most exquisite works; and although all the ancient memoirs of that convent assert that the expenses of this picture, and of the ornamentations of the chapel for which it was destined, were defrayed by the friar Sebastiano Lambardi di Montecatini, Father Ignatius Manandro, the Chronicler of the convent, is of opinion that Pagnini forwarded the work at his own cost. Hence, we are to conclude that Melchiorre Missirini was in error when he wrote that Porta's famous picture, known as the Virgin della Misericordia, or del Patrocinio, was painted at the expense of a Gonfa-

[1] Under date June 6, 1515, we have an entry of various sums given by the Syndic of the convent to Fra Bartolommeo.

[2] This celebrated Orientalist was elected Prior of San Romano in Lucca, either in 1513 or 1515.

lonier of Lucca, of the family de' Montecatini.[1] Two original documents, which we give in a note, prove Fra Sebastiano's title to the proprietary of the picture; but, independently of the two documents cited, Missirini might easily have learned from the cyphers which the artist inscribed on the embasement on which the Virgin is elevated, the initials of the name of the party who engaged him to execute the work.[2] I am assured, moreover, that no such name as Montecatini or Lambardi, is to be found in the series of the Gonfaloniers of Lucca; but, irrespective of the common tradition, which states that Lambardi invited Porta to paint this picture in Loppeglia, a part of the Lucchese territory, whose church was then governed by Lambardo, we have another reason for believing it, which is, that about this period Fra Bartolommeo was most certainly in Prato, Pistoja, and some of the other towns near Lucca.

"To the glory of the Italian Arts," said Antonio Canova, "we can point out two splendid paintings, which may be said to have no parallels, if we consider the

[1] Lib. Cron. Conv. S. Romani de Lucca, Ord. Præd. commenced A.D. 1525. "Laudable is what I subjoin, namely, that he (Pagnini) assisted, perhaps, by Fra Sebastiano de' Montecatini, restored the chapel which is opposite to the sacristy, adorning it with marble from Fiesole, with glass windows, and placing therein wooden benches, and what was still better and grander, decorating it with the beauteous and splendid painting which Fra Bartolommeo of our Order executed. Fra Sebastiano expended on these works, about three hundred gold crowns." The Syndic of the convent of San Marco, alludes to it thus, "Item, a picture that Fra Sebastiano de' Montecatini caused to be painted, which was sent to our convent in Lucca, valued at about 230 ducats."

[2] Di un quadro insigne rappresentante la M. delle Misericordie di Fra Bartolommeo, e dell' incisione eseguitane da Giuseppe Sanders. Firenze, 1834, per Leonardo Ciardetti.—The initials are the following, F. S. O. P. (Frater Sebastianus Ord. Præd.) Alexander VI. permitted this Fra Sebastiano to live outside his cloister. In 1498, he was elected Prior of Loppeglia.

ensemble of their perfections: the one is the magnificent picture of the Assumption, by Tiziano, and the other is the Virgin della Misericordia, by Fra Bartolommeo."[1]

This picture is about six-and-a-half Florentine braccia high, by four-and-a-half wide. It is semi-circular at the summit, and it contains forty-eight figures, either half or whole, large as life. Mazzarosa, who made it the subject of a second letter, addressed to Pietro Giordani, 22nd September, 1828, speaks of it thus:—"A mulitude of the faithful, of every age, sex, and condition, has recourse to Mary (who stands on a throne in the centre), supplicating Her to intercede for them in their common affliction. Mary, the Mother of mercies, as the words on the foot-stool indicate, receives their prayers, and, with hands and eyes raised to heaven, invokes the divine mercy on those who confide in her: nor in vain, because we behold, as it were, in a vision over her, the merciful Lord, who is poised in the air. His breast is visible, and the rest of His body is concealed by the clouds. We see, however, His naked side, and the wound is also perceptible, as the wind has gently moved the crimson robe with which the painter has most appropriately clothed Him. This figure, with its benignant expression of countenance and extended arms, most happily illustrates the words on the little scroll, 'Misereor super turbam.' Nothing can be more beautiful than the disposition of the figures according to sex and age. The mothers, with their children, are on the steps of the throne; the younger children are behind these, whilst angels hover over the whole group. Each and all of them have their eyes riveted on the Virgin, and the adults and old men are at her sides. Three groups excel all the rest: one of them stands at

[1] Misirini.

foot of the throne, on the right of which there is a mother directing her little son to fix his eyes on the Virgin; another is a mother, with two children, one of whom, having got behind her cunningly, tries to annoy the naked baby in the parent's arms, whilst the wrinkled nurse chides his playfulness. This is a group of singular truth and beauty, but somewhat inopportune, because it distracts the eye and the mind from the principal subject, and because these two women seem not to be impressed by the presence of the Virgin, on whom the eyes of all the others are turned most devoutly. The third is, perhaps, the most beautiful. It represents S. Dominic in the act of pointing out the Madonna, with the fore-finger of his right hand, to the Gonfalonier of the Republic, whilst with his left he encourages him to approach Her. It is thought that the S. Dominic is the portrait of Fra Sebastiano; and that the Gonfalonier is Montecatini, who held that office at the period. A poor man, half naked, on the right of the Virgin, is exceedingly well designed and coloured. Mary is erect on the throne, and seems to have just arisen from her seat, as she has not yet removed her right foot, which rests on the little footstool; whilst her left, on which she supports herself, has already touched the pedestal—a most natural action, as the left foot is always foremost in descending. The Virgin is robed in ample crimson drapery, shot with white. From her head falls an azure veil, of large and graceful dimensions, whose ends are borne by two angels on the wing. Full of sympathy for her poor suppliants, whose miseries she knows, her beauteous face and eyes evidence her maternal tenderness. Her right hand is raised above her head, in the act of supplication; and her left points out the people beneath her. Showing to Christ those who need her mercy, she so looks at, and prays the Redeemer, as almost, if I

may use the phrase, to wring the yearned-for grace from Him. . . . . Here let us observe that Christ is visible to her alone, for she alone has her eyes fixed on Him. This was a most wise conception, for it preserves the unity of the action: any other disposition must have been an error, as Mary could not then be the principal object of the picture, as was required of the painter.

"Now, if you consider the *tout-ensemble* of this great painting, and all its parts, one by one, you will perceive that I have not exaggerated in calling it stupendous, and fit to be placed side by side with Raffaello's Transfiguration."[1] And Missirini, after having described it, figure by figure, concludes thus:—"Here the excellence of design, the primary and substantial characteristic of every production of art, is beyond all praise. In every part of the picture we find true sublimity, nay, and that inspiration with which the scenery of a gorgeous theatre is calculated to overflood the soul—here the powerful expression pierces our bosoms and stirs them to their depth. How shall I describe the movements, attitudes, or the graceful flow of the draperies for which the Friar was so famous? What shall I say of the vivid colouring which is not surpassed by Tiziano's tintings? The shadows are diaphanous, the opposition of the tints homogeneous, and the effect of the chiaroscuro magical."[2]

[1] Mazzarosa. Missirini. There are some designs of this painting executed by Porta, with a pen, in the gallery of the Uffizj, at Florence.

[2] The painter did not conceal his name, for he inscribed it on the step of the Virgin's throne, where we read, "MDXV. Frater Bartholomeus. ord. præd. Pictor Florentinus." This painting has been engraved by Sanders and by Samuel jesi di Correggio. Morghen would have engraved it, had he not been prevented by death. Nocchi of Lucca has done me the kindness of the following communication:—"In the last century, there was another picture by Fra Bartolommeo over the great altar of the church of S. Dominic, in

These words of two such illustrious critics must terminate our remarks on this painting. I will merely observe, that if Porta, influenced, no doubt, by Michelangiolo, sometimes bordered on exaggeration in design, he was also sometimes crude in his tintings, and, perhaps, somewhat ignoble in the expression of his heads. In this painting, in San Romano at Lucca, 'tis easy to recognize the tone of Venetian colouring, united to the *grandiose* style of Michelangiolo, and adorned with the gracefulness of Raffaello. Here there is not the slightest exaggeration, if we except the nude of the children, and the movements are perfectly unconstrained; whilst the attitudes and arrangement of the drapery may be pronounced faultless. Although the picture of S. Catherine and S. Mary Magdalene, that he executed a few years before for the same church, pleases me more, I will not deny that this, in all that regards colouring, is one of the most marvellous works produced by the Friar of San Marco.

On his way back to Florence it seems that Fra Bartolommeo tarried some time in the cities of Pistoja and Prato. Wheresoever he went, he was wont to leave some monument of his genius; and being requested by his friends of the convent of San Domenico, in Pistoja, to bequeath them some reminiscence, he painted a Virgin, with the Infant in her arms, on the internal wall of the monastery. This picture, executed in 1669, was, subsequently, sawed off the wall and placed in the church over

the same city. It represented S. Dominic standing on the step of a marble throne, on which three nuns were kneeling on either side of him. The Saint held the rules of his Order and the city in his left hand, whilst he blessed the sisters with his right. Two angels bore the train of the holy patriarch. This work, which is said to be in Porta's purest style, was removed to the interior of the monastery; and a picture by Sister Aurelia Fiorentini, a Dominican paintress, has been substituted for it."

the altar of the Fioravanti.[1] When I saw it in 1844, though much injured, especially in the under part, it appeared to me to be very beautiful and graceful; and I found in it a suavity of pencilling which does not characterise the generality of this artist's frescos.

So near to his own country, Fra Bartolommeo could not forget his natal soil, that humble village of Savignano, where his childhood sped and where the bones of his fathers were mouldering. The author of the Bibliography of Prato, on whose works we have drawn so largely, left us the following notice of Porta's visit to Prato and its neighbourhood: it is taken from "Martini's Miscellanee." We will give it in its integrity and simplicity, for we could not heighten the effect of a narrative recording one of these incidents that so sweeten weary life—the warm greetings of kinsmen after long years of absence.

"Fra Bartolommeo came to Lastruccia with another Friar of S. Dominic's Order, and after staying some time with his uncle Giusto, when he was one day standing under an oak near a little fountain, Pagolo di Vite, a child of about nine or ten years being present, Fra Bartolommeo said: 'Giusto, had you not a nephew who became a friar?' 'Yes,' replied Giusto; and then Fra Bartolommeo asked: 'If you saw him would you know him?' Whereon, Giusto replied, 'You are he!' and then they embraced and recognized each other as kinsmen. This was Fra Bartolommeo's uncle; and when the friar was about to depart, he said to Giusto, 'It may be a long time till I see you again, for the King of France has sent for me, as he wants me to execute some works for him.' This I have had from the lips of Pagolo di Vite, who was a labourer in the employment of Andrea Comparini. Said Pagolo

[1] Francesco Tolomei, Giuda di Pistoja.

was Fra Bartolommeo's nephew."[1] This extract conveys an important fact not mentioned by Vasari, which is, that Porta was invited by Francis I. to proceed to France to the court of that monarch who was a munificent patron of Italian artists, and who at that very period admitted Lionardo da Vinci to share his favour and hospitality. In fact, Fra Bartolommeo's fame must have been familiar to the French people, as many of his works had already been admired in their country. The picture of S. Sebastian had certainly been sent thither after the year 1516, as the Syndic of the convent of San Marco mentions it amongst these then in Florence, and the clenchus of the painting was made in that year precisely. What may have interfered with Fra Bartolommeo's determination to cross the Alps I know not; but it is probable that his health, and the number of works he had to execute, may have kept him from prosecuting his intention.

Whilst Fra Bartolommeo remained in Prato, he painted a picture of the Assumption, which, according to Vasari, was placed opposite to the public prison; or, as others would have it, in Santa Maria in Castello, as there was a church of this name over against said jail. This picture is mentioned in Martini's Miscellanee, and it bore date 1516.[2] I think, however, that Porta coloured it after his return from Florence, and that he finished it towards the end of 1516.[3] I have not been able to ascertain where it is now, and even Maselli, that most eminent

[1] Bibliografia Pratese, p. 115, note.

[2] Lionardo da Vinci set out for France in January, 1516. Francis I. appointed him his painter at a salary seven hundred dollars annually. V. Delecluze. We need not say, that Primaticcio, Rosso, Andrea del Sarto, and Cellini were also invited to the same country.

[3] Bibliografia Pratese.

historian of our artistic antiquities, acknowledges his ignorance of its vicissitudes.[1] Lanzi writes that he saw in the possession of the Marquis Acciauoli a picture of the Assumption, the upper part of which was painted by Porta, and the under by Mariotto Albertinelli; and he thinks it to have been that which Fra Bartolommeo executed for Prato;[2] but Albertinelli was dead in 1516. Cesare Guasti, the author of the Pratese Bibliography, at first thought that it had been removed to Vienna; but he, subsequently, corrected the error, and confessed himself unacquainted with its location; he, doubtless, confounded it with the Presentation in the Temple that is still in the Imperial city. My own researches, however, have brought the following facts to light: During the days of the fatal innovations introduced by Scipione Ricci, bishop of Prato and Pistoja, the church of Santa Maria, in Castello, at Prato, was suppressed. Now this church possessed a painting by Fra Bartolommeo of Mary taken up into Heaven. She was habited in a flowing robe, and beneath her was an urn or sepulchre with flowers, and on her right was the Baptist, and on her left, S. Catherine, Virgin and Martyr. This painting was in the custody of the person presiding over the hospital of Prato. When Gini was Administrator of the Royal Ecclesiastical Patrimony of said city, it was sold to Giulio Porrini, Chancellor of Florence, for the sum of *six dollars*. Porini sold it to an Englishman

[1] As there is no mention of this picture in the catalogue compiled by the Syndic of the convent in 1516, we infer that it was executed some months later.

[2] Hist. of Painting, Florentine School, second Epoch. If this work exhibits traces of two different painters, we may conjecture that Porta was assisted at it by Fra Paolino da Pistoja. It is certain that he availed himself of his services during the last periods of his life.

in Florence for a hundred zecchini, and this Englishman sold it to Mr. Milton for a hundred and fifty zecchini; finally, Pius VI. purchased it from Milton, giving him more than three thousand Roman crowns for this masterpiece by our Friar.[1] It was at last carried off from Rome during the invasion, and is now in the Royal Museum at Berlin; as M. Rio, relying perhaps on the authority of Lanzi, tells us that the Assumption in that gallery was executed partly by Bra Bartolommeo, and partly by Marietto Albertinelli.[2]

For his convent of San Domenico, at Prato, our friar executed two little pictures, one of which represents the head of Jesus, and the other, that of the Virgin, valued at five ducats. The catalogue compiled by the Syndic of the Convent mentions them both. Towards the end of summer, or the beginning of the autumn of 1515, Fra Bartolommeo returned to Florence, and undertook some new and important works. The picture of the Angelical Salutation, now in the Louvre, was produced in this year. Rio praises this work for the poetical and imaginative conception of Fra Bartolommeo, who, instead of painting her kneeling, and saluted by the Angel, represents her seated on a throne, surrounded by some Saints, and receiving the tidings of the great mystery.[3] I will here

[1] I am indebted to Signor Guasti for this notice which is partly extracted from a letter, and partly from a work by Marchetti (The Pacific Annotations confirmed by the new Pastoral of the bishop of Pistoja and Prato, &c., 1788). Father Muscaria, a Basilian Monk, utters the following invective against the said bishop:—"You have astonished Rome by your heroic zeal—you who sold for a contemptible sum the painting of the Madonna della cintura, by the celebrated Dominican, Fra Bartolommeo della Porta—you did this, and the Pope has repurchased that famous picture for three thousand dollars!

[2] Rio, Poesie, Chretienne, chap. ix. p. 373, note.

[3] Rio, loc. cit., p. 383.

observe, that if this picture be really an Annunciation, which I doubt, the painter has chosen a very bizarre mode of expressing it. The next notice that we have of Porta, describes him once more in the hospice of S. Maria Maddalena, in Pian di Mugnone, painting an Annunciation in the little church of the religious. It is a very pretty little work, and the figures are small. Perhaps it was during this period that he painted, in an obscure part of the cloister, a head of Jesus of Nazareth; and over the door of the same cloister, half figures of S. Dominic and S. Francis embracing. These two figures are admirable for grandeur of manner, the softness and harmony of the tints, and the great relief of the design. Every touch of the pencil, in this composition, is bold and free.

Florence was now preparing for the visit of Leo X., and the Republic invited all its most distinguished artists to dedicate themselves to the solemnization of this most joyful event. The imitative arts were now to do homage to the Pontiff, who so signally fostered and protected them. Andrea del Sarto, Aristotile da S. Gallo, Granacci, Rosso, Sansovino, Baccio Bandinelli, Baccio da Monte Lupo, all were now met to vie with each other in these immortal works, which Vasari describes in his life of Andrea del Sarto. As the Pontiff was to hold his court in the convent of S. Maria Novella, the Republic commissioned Pontormo to execute some frescos in the private chapel where his Holiness was to officiate; and it also engaged Ridolfo del Ghirlandajo to paint a picture for the same chapel, and to design all the decorations for it, as well as for the Pontifical apartment. Fra Bartolommeo della Porta was not employed to execute any work.

On the 30th of November, 1516, two hours before

sunset, Pope Leo X. entered Florence, and proceeded to the convent of S. Maria Novella. At the humble request of the religious, the Pontiff, and his entire retinue, assisted at the sacred functions on the Feast of the Epiphany, which was the anniversary of the dedication of that church. The religious of the convent of S. Maria Novella superintended the decorating of the church. Perhaps it was at this period that Fra Bartolommeo coloured the picture of the Presentation in the Temple, for the chapel of the Novitiate, as it bears date 1516.[1] The Pontiff, his court, and Swiss Guard, dined in the convent; and the annalist of San Marco remarks,—"That day was a very hell for us" (magnus infernus extitit nobis illa dies).[2] In all probability the soldiery got too much wine, and acted, as most soldiers would on a similar occasion. I think it very likely, too, that the Pope visited Porta's studio, and that the religious presented him with some of his paintings. He then visited the library, took up a manuscript, and read it, and on taking leave of the community, pledged himself to pay serious attention to the question of S. Antonino's

[1] Bottari, in a note to the life of Fra Bartolom., writes, that the picture which Vasari says was coloured by Porta, when Raffaello was in Florence, is an error of this biographer, as it bears the name of the Friar, and is dated 1517. He adds, that the subject of it is an Annunciation, and that the painter has improperly introduced S. John Baptist, S. Mary Magdalene, S. Paul, S. Jerome, and two other Holy Religious; but Bottari did not know that there are two works by our Friar, in Paris. Although the other may not have been brought there till a later period. As to the date, 1517, I would much rather rely on the authority of Rio, who, writing in France, could easily ascertain whether it was 1515 or 1517. It appears strange that the religious of San Marco, who employed the most distinguished artists to decorate their church, never availed themselves of the services of Fra Bartol., who was then the most eminent painter in Florence.

[2] Annal. S. Marci.

canonization. We regard this condescension of his Holiness as very remarkable, since he positively refused to visit the other religious orders who memorialed him for that purpose. It now remains for us to speak of the Presentation of the Infant Jesus in the Temple.

Many persons, through ignorance of the history, have strangely confounded the Circumcision with the Presentation in the Temple. Porta, however, has shown himself to have been well acquainted with that legal ceremony, and he therefore confined himself within the limits of truth. In this painting there are six figures of the natural dimensions. He placed the Priest in the centre, standing on a step of the temple, and holding the nude Infant in his arms. On his right, is S. Joseph standing; on the left, is the Virgin; and prostrate at the feet of the priest, and between him and S. Joseph, is the prophetess Anna. The ceremony is performed within a precinct of the temple, which the painter has drawn in very simple architecture. Simeon, venerable in age and aspect, and somewhat bent by years, seems to be invigorated by the long-expected revelation, which permits him to clasp the Liberator in his arms. The countenance, and whole person of the Virgin, indicate ineffable tenderness; and while placing the Infant in Simeon's arms, she so follows Him with her eyes, as though she could not, for a single instant, lose sight of the Heaven-sent Babe. The painter represents her in the act of gently pressing the Infant's right foot, as though she meant to join it to the left, which He playfully raises. Joseph, who is on the right, and opposite to the Virgin, seems grave and thoughtful. Nothing can be more marked than the contrast between him and his youthful spouse, whose countenance is radiant with tenderness and affection. Enveloped in a flowing robe he stretches out his right hand, in which he

holds the votive doves, whilst he presses his left to his bosom. Although the prophetic Simeon has not yet revealed to the Mother the multiplied woes through which her Son was destined to pass, as we may collect from the joyful countenances of them both, Joseph, nevertheless, seems to be overwhelmed by some gloomy anticipation.

Anna, supernally informed of the divinity of the Infant, devoutly prostrates herself before Him, imploring and receiving His benediction. Behind her is a maiden who seems to have come to witness the sacred function. These figures are of beautiful design; and we will barely speak of *it*, as it has not been our good fortune to see the original; indeed, the copy that we have seen is only mediocre. The figure of Simeon would be truly beautiful, were it not somewhat defective in the foreshortening —an effect produced, no doubt, by the amplitude of the draperies. The light gracefulness of the Virgin makes this still more apparent; and, as she is the tallest figure in the entire composition, the eye never tires of contemplating her. Anna, the prophetess, would have been better located elsewhere; for, as all the figures are in one line, she has some difficulty in seeing the Infant, and similar difficulty attends Him whilst giving the blessing. There can be no doubt that this is the action which the artist desired to represent. Wherefore it occurs to us that the figures in the little picture of the circumcision, now in the gallery of the Uffizj, are better grouped and disposed.[1] Let us finally observe, that the drapery of all the figures is natural and grand. Father della Valle,

[1] In the same gallery there is a little copy of this same Presentation, by the hand of Fra Bartol., about a palm and a half high. It differs a little from the original; but it has been injured by retouching, and the colouring

who saw the original whilst it was still in the novitiate of San Marco, states, that the following inscription, dated 1516, was at foot of it:—"Orate pro pictore olim Sacelli hujus alumno." This alludes to the period when Fra Bartolommeo, after returning from Prato, made a short sojourn there, and this is the reason why Della Valle states that Bartolommeo took the habit, not in Prato, but in San Marco, at Florence.[1] The picture of the Presentation was ultimately removed to the Imperial Gallery of Vienna, and the novitiate of San Marco retains only a very indifferent copy, in which Porta allowed some modifications to be introduced.[2]

Before speaking of the painting dated 1516, perhaps we ought to have mentioned a picture of great dimensions and rarest merit; but as the year in which it was produced is not specified on the work, we have thought this the fitting place to describe it. It certainly belongs to our friar's latest manner, and was executed towards the close of the year 1516; nay, even before the two paintings already alluded to, that is to say, the Assumption at Prato, and the Presentation now in Vienna; for the latter are not specified in the catalogue compiled by the Syndic of the convent of San Marco (A.D., 1516); whereas, it makes distinct mention of the Saviour Risen, which we will now describe.

Salvator Billi, a Florentine merchant, had employed Pietro Rosselli to adorn his chapel in the church of the

is much damaged. The great picture of the novitiate has been splendidly engraved by Perfetti and Lauger in the work entitled "Galerie Imperiale-Royale au Belvidere a Vienne, publiée par Charles Haas, Vienne et Prague, 1821.

[1] Note to Vasari. Ediz. dei Classici di Milano, vol. vii.

[2] I do not know the author of this copy. In the Pharmacy of San Marco the original designs of this work are still preserved.

Nunziata, with the choicest creations of his chisel. He then entreated Porta to paint a picture of the Saviour, with analogous figures, as Billi was zealous for the honour of Him whose name he bore (Salvatore). Fra Bartolommeo, therefore, who was as excellent in design as he was in composition, determined to epitomise, in a single painting, the entire economy of the Christian Religion; and in a style so truly noble, that this production should deserve to be called a sublime epic. In the upper part, therefore, he painted the two prophets, Job and Isaias, who, as it were, beholding the future unfolded to their vision, announce the promised Liberator. Job is seated and clothed in a flowing robe that covers his whole person. His red mantle is so strongly coloured, and withal shaded so somberly, that nothing could have been designed better adapted to the "Man of sorrows in the land of Hus." With both his outstretched hands he grasps a parchment, and seems to invite us to read the words of the sacred text inscribed thereon. "I know that my REDEEMER liveth, and in the last day I shall rise out of the earth, and I shall be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh I shall see my God; this, my hope, is laid up in my bosom." In design and colouring this figure is most beautiful. Isaias, whose drapery is somewhat freer, is represented as more youthful than the "Man of Hus;" and, like him, seated, seems rapt in a celestial furor, whilst prophesying the dolours and glories of Him who ransomed the human race. This figure is full of life, and in the relief resembles the S. Mark.[1] These two prophets, who form the best part of the picture, were removed from the entire composition,

[1] They have been engraved in outline in the first tome of the first series della Galleria di Firenze Illustrata, Tav. xxxiv. and xxv.

and were placed in the gallery of the Uffizj, in an apartment which, for a while, was known as the "Hall of the Friar." It was a tribute of respect offered by his country to the man whose pencil shed such lustre on it. The prophets are now in the tribune, and have for their vis-a-vis two obscene Venuses!

In the centre of the picture he painted Christ Risen. He stands majestically on an embasement, holding the cross in His left hand, whilst His right is in the act of blessing. He is nude, or but partly covered by a white veil. Around Him are the four Evangelists in the act of discoursing on their evangelical mission. At the foot of the base on which the Redeemer stands, he painted, in a little circle, a small landscape of such exquisite beauty, that it makes us regret his abandonment of this style of painting. Over this ornamentation is the Chalice, the compendium of religion; for preaching, symbolized by the Apostles, and the Eucharist typified by the Chalice, comprise and embrace the whole doctrine of Jesus Christ. The circle on which the chalice rests, is sustained by two nude angels, so beautiful, so graceful, and so exquisitely coloured, that they are not inferior to those in the first picture of S. Luke. The composition of this work is simple, and well defined. Placing Jesus Christ between the Prophets and the Apostles, he showed how the two Testaments were united in His person, and that He is the angular stone upon which the mystic edifice of the Catholic Church is built. In the inferior part of the picture, that is, in the five figures already described, I think the design exhibits traces of mannerism, and a certain constraint in the movements. The colouring, too, is inferior to that of the two Prophets. I should, perhaps, have observed, that the figures of Job and Isaias are better preserved; whereas, the rest have suffered sadly from

time and retouching. I do not agree with Borghini, who says that the figures in the under part of the picture are somewhat too much shortened, but I think that the heaviness of the robing makes them appear a little unfinished.

Our Friar received one hundred gold ducats for this work, as the Syndic of the convent informs us. Cardinal Carlo de' Medici purchased it from the Servite Fathers in 1618, and left them a copy of it, which some imagine was executed by Empoli; whereas, Bottari asserts that it was by Domenico Pugliani. The original, which was at first removed to the Cardinal's casino, was afterwards transported to the Pitti palace, and, finally, along with the S. Mark, to Paris, in 1799. Both these paintings remained fourteen years in the Louvre, which, like the Pinacoteca of Verres and Mummius, was enriched with the spoils of all Europe; and the Italians, like the Greeks, had reason to complain that the Conqueror did not leave them even the images of their divinities. Thanks to Canova's love of Father-land, these and other objects of Art were restored to Italy in 1814.

Not having the opportune notices, and not knowing the true epoch, we think it was about this period that Fra Bartolommeo made an excursion to the hermitage of Lecceto, belonging to the Congregation of San Marco. This hermitage, that resembled a small convent, was situated in the Commune of San Martino, at Gangalandi, not far from Malmantile, on the road to Pisa. Lecceto takes its designation from the ilexes in which the region abounds.[1] Professor Micheli, the Florentine painter,

[1] A certain father Guerrieri, a religious of the convent of San Marco, who had been a disciple of S. Antonino, desiring to lead an eremitical life, obtained faculties from his superiors to petition the community of Gangalandi for a spot in the wood, that he might build there a little hermitage, unde

who visited it in 1843, informs me that he found the ancient Hospice reduced to the condition of a small colony; the belfry in a state of ruin: the church in fair preservation, and of beautiful architecture. It contains a stupendous painting by Domenico del Ghirlandajo, the inscription on which states that the Strozzi family caused it to be executed. In the interior of the Hospice he discovered a Deposition from the Cross, painted by Fra Bartolommeo; and on two tiles, made fast in the wall, two heads of Jesus of Nazareth, by the same artist. These works may have been executed in the summer or autumn of 1516;[1] and it was probably about the same period that he designed, in oil, in the house of Pier del Pugliese, the armed figure of S. George, slaying the serpent. Finding it noticed by the Syndic of the convent, amongst Porta's unfinished works, I think we may infer that it belongs to the year 1516.

CHAPTER VIII.

Last Paintings of Fra Bartolommeo—His Death and Eulogy—His Designs and his Pupils.

We now approach the term of Fra Bartolommeo's earthly career; and we grieve to think that his precious days were so few; and that regret is heightened by the

the invocation of Our Lady of the Assumption. His prayer was granted in 1475, and the Strozzi family assisted him in raising the little edifice, which subsequently was converted into a Hospice for the Dominicans. Annales S. Marci.

[1] Under date, December 23, 1516, we find, in the Archives of San Marco, an acknowledgment from a painter called Francesco di Filippo di Antonio di Ridolfo, of the sum of ten gold ducats, lent to him by Fra Bartolommeo. Miscellanea, No. 2.

consciousness of our own inability to write of him, and his works as they deserve. Nevertheless, the notices that we have disinterred from the oblivion in which they were permitted to remain for fully three centuries, must throw additional light on the biography and works of this eminent painter. Indeed, it is for us a consolation, that he has, at length, found amongst his confreres, a feeble, but affectionate historian.

Fra Bartolommeo had now completed his forty-eighth year, and it is only reasonable to suppose that he calculated on a protracted future. Nevertheless, he was for a long time afflicted by a slow malady that greatly enfeebled his health. We have seen him more than once betaking himself to the pure air of the country, doubtless, to reinvigorate his shattered constitution. It is remarkable, however, that during the latter period of his life, though fully conscious that the time of his dissolution was nigh, he displayed more wonderful activity, and produced a greater number of paintings. The same may be said of Raffaello, who, three years afterwards, in the prime of manhood, was destined to follow him to the sepulchre. But who could describe the immense number of paintings, whether on canvas or in fresco, that he produced during this last period, since they are either dispersed or placed beyond the ken of the writer? The private citizens of Florence possess many of them; but as these were unimportant works, we will not expend many words on them.[1] Here, I will take occasion to warn my readers not to rely too much

[1] For example, we find in the residence of the Ricasoli family, a head of Jesus of Nazareth, painted on a tile. It is like that in the Pitti Gallery, which has been illustrated and engraved by Baroli. In the house of the Panzani family, I remember having seen a small picture representing Our

on the Guide-Books of Florence, which attribute to Fra Bartolommeo works that are not his. We will now speak of the paintings which he finished, and then of such as he left imperfect, and which may be regarded as posterior to the others. In the Hospice of S. Maria Maddalena, in Pian di Mugnone, a spot that had peculiar attractions for him, he executed a beautiful fresco in 1517, the last year of his mortal term. In a little chapel near the entrance, he painted our Lord appearing to Mary in the semblance of a gardener. In a verdureless tract of country you behold the sepulchre hollowed in the mountain, which shuts out the perspective on one side. Two figures of life-size are the only objects perceptible on the superficies. The holy and enamoured penitent has just recognized her beloved Lord, and she seems to be overwhelmed with affection. Her left knee is bent to the earth, and her right hand rests on a stone whereon is inscribed:—"I have found him whom my soul loveth. 1517." Nothing could have better expressed the innermost soul of the painter, than these words from the Canticle. The countenance (and we see only the profile) of Magdalene, is very beautiful: her attitude facile and spontaneous; and the folds of the draperies are exquisite beyond description. The Redeemer is semi-nude, and clothed in a white veil, resembling that in the picture executed for Salvatore Billi. He holds an agricultural implement in His left hand, and seems to repel Magdalene with His right, whilst the benignant expression of His countenance comforts and consoles her. The figure of the Redeemer, in my judgment, is not

Lord appearing to Magdalene, as the gardener; this is executed in his first manner, and is much inferior to his other works; it is damaged by retouching. The Baldelli possess a Holy Family, which evidently belongs to Portà earliest period, after he had left Cosimo Rosselli.

sufficiently venerable and celestial; for, indeed, His youthfulness, earthly beauty, attitude, and semi-nude limbs, do not impress us with a fitting idea of His glorious Resurrection. This work has already suffered much from the action of damp, and I fear that the place in which it actually is, must ultimately ruin it. In the same church, near the entrance-door, Fra Bartolommeo painted (in a niche) a Crucifixion, and Mary Magdalene embracing the Cross; and on either side, in two circles, two heads of Dominican Saints. Time that has almost entirely destroyed the other figures, has not yet touched that of Magdalene, which is still most charming and graceful. Alas! it, too, must soon perish!

We may now enumerate some frescoes which he executed in his convent of San Marco, and which may be classed amongst his latest works. In the chapel DEL GIOVANATO there is a Madonna with the Infant in her arms, cruelly injured by the sawing of the wall, when they were removing this, along with other works by Porta, to the Gallery of the Academy of Design. This fresco is in his enlarged style, and exceeds the natural proportions. In the same chapel, probably in the circles round the altar, it is very likely that he painted the ten heads of the saints, that are now in the foresaid gallery. Eight of them were executed in fresco and two in oil: amongst them was the portrait of Savonarola in the guise of S. Peter martyr, less faithfully delineated than the picture now possessed by Signor Rubieri in Prato. The Florentine Academy also possesses two Virgins with the divine Infant, which he painted on the wall. They are marked, number 44. These works, in my opinion, are not remarkable for gracefulness or accuracy in their details; so we content ourselves with barely mentioning them. But nothing can excel the perfection of the four

half figures of the Dominican saints that he painted in the inferior dormitory, over the entrance to the schools of the convent of San Marco. In boldness and freedom of pencilling, not to speak of their shading, they surpass every other that he executed in this style. Most worthy of notice is the S. Thomas of Aquino and another Dominican saint, whose heads seem to speak.[1]

Of the unfinished paintings I will mention but three. The Assumption, now in the church of Santa Maria del Sasso, was designed by Fra Bartolommeo, and coloured by Fra Paolino;—a Deposition from the Cross, a picture of the middle size, over the grand altar of the little church of the Dominicans in Pian di Mugnone, along with the usual figures of the Virgin and Magdalene, contains S. John, S. Dominic, and S. Thomas of Aquino. When the original was removed to the Florentine Academy, it was substituted by a very beautiful copy, by an unknown hand. Fra Bartolommeo merely outlined this painting, and left the colouring of it to Fra Paolino.—The third is the grand painting that was intended for the Council Hall, and, as we have said, it was commenced in 1512.

If not all, certainly some of these works might have been begun by Fra Bartolommeo in the spring of 1517. In the summer of this year he set out for the baths of San Filippo, with the hope of benefiting his health; but, alas, they did him little good! On his return to Florence he resumed the grand painting for the Council Hall, and

[1] Cinelli says, that in the refectory of San Marco there is a Blessed Virgin together with a S. Dominic and S. Catherine of Siena, by Fra Bartolommeo, and also a S. Vincent Ferrer, by the same hand. (Bellezze di Firenze, p. 469.) We have no other account of these paintings. The S. Vincent was in the passage leading to the sacristy. I have not ascertained whether Fra Bartol. painted two figures of this saint.

it was a source of regret to him that a work commenced many years before, and for which he was already in great part paid, had not yet been completed. He considered, moreover, that this was a tribute of respect which his country paid him; and, indeed, that Council Hall deserved to be adorned by Buonarrotti and Lionardo da Vinci. Committing the work to Fra Bartolommeo, Florence pronounced him to be third in this galaxy of glory, and the only one who was worthy of competing with these supreme masters. That very hall, too, was built by Gerolamo Savonarola, after he had driven Piero de' Medici out of Florence, and restored liberty to the citizens. Fra Bartolommeo, therefore, was to paint the portraits of all the Saints during whose times the Florentine Republic had gained the most signal victories over its enemies, in order to perpetuate the memory of the men who achieved freedom for their native land and upreared its glories. These considerations were well calculated to awaken a holy impatience in the bosom of our friar, that he might thus set the seal on all his brilliant performances, and exclaim with Horace, "Exegi monumentum;" but in vain: he merely outlined and designed the work (and let us here observe, that the composition is nowise inferior to that of the Virgin del Patrocinio in Lucca); but he was not destined to perfect it. Death allowed Raffaello to finish the Transfiguration, that the sight of it, during his funereal obsequies, might convince the people of the tremendous loss which the world had sustained; but it did not give Fra Bartolommeo time to complete his chef d'œuvre.[1] Let us hear Vasari:—"The

[1] In this painting, besides the Glory in the upper part, are the following figures:—S. Anne, the B.V.M. with the Infant on her bosom, S. John Baptist, S. John Gualbert, Sta. Reparata, S. Zanobi, S. Barnabas, S. Vito, S. Antonino, beside whom is a figure which, according to Vasari, is Fra

master had entirely completed the design of the picture, when, in consequence of having laboured perpetually beneath a window, the rays of which poured constantly on his back, one side of his body became paralysed, and he could not move himself. He was, therefore, advised by his physician to proceed to the baths at San Filippo; but, although he remained there a considerable time, he became but very little better. Fra Bartolommeo was a great lover of fruit, finding the flavour particularly grateful to him, although it was exceedingly injurious to his health; wherefore, one morning, having eaten very plentifully of figs, he was attacked, in addition to his previous malady, with a violent access of fever, which finished the course of his life in four days, and when he had attained the age of forty-eight years; he retained his consciousness to the last, and with humble trust resigned his soul to heaven. The death of Fra Bar-

Bartolommeo's portrait. Camillo Pucci, of Sarzana, a very distinguished painter, has given me the following artistic criticism of this work :—"If we take the subject and destination of the picture into account, I believe that Christian art does not possess any painting grander or more solemn than this; in fact, there is no other so severe and varied in its symmetry, more harmonious in its lines, or more beautiful for its architectural ground. The disposition of the groups and figures, and the individual character of each of them, is admirably calculated to impress the mind with a profound notion of its grandeur and magnificence, and it comprises the most wonderful element of the art of the three supreme masters, Lionardo, Raffaello, and Angelo. In the central group we easily recognise the finish and suavity of the Lionardesque style, nay, even the manner of the composition reminds us of the famous cartoon of Sta. Anna, by that celebrated man to whom Fra Bartol. did homage in this his last work, as he commenced his pictorial career by studying his designs. Who will not recognise his veneration for Buonarotti in the bold attitude of these figures, and the energy which characterises these extremities? As for the *gloria* over the Divine Infant, and the children who sit on the steps and sing, we regard them as inspired by the graceful and delicate manner of Raffaello" This painting, formerly in the chapel of Ott. de' Medici, in S. Lorenzo, has been removed to the gallery of the Uffizj.

tolommeo caused infinite grief to his friends, but more particularly to the monks of his Order, who gave him honourable sepulture in San Marco, on the 8th of October, 1517."[1]

His death at such an immature period, and in the meridian of his glory, was regarded by every one as a calamity; for in him Art lost a grand master, society a spotless citizen, and the cloister a truly religious brother. Less fortunate than Fra Giovanni Angelico, he had no patron to raise a monument or inscribe an epitaph, which would tell posterity where all that earthly of him mouldered. Withal, I would say, that Porta died at a happy moment, for he did not live to see his country enslaved by a monster, or to witness the terrible disasters that, at a subsequent period, rained down on Italy. Had he lived a few days longer, he must have heard the fearful cry of "Reformation" thundering in his ears from distant Germany![2] Some of Fra Bartolommeo's friends dictated the following eulogy, which has been preserved by Vasari in his first edition of the Lives of the Painters, Sculptors, and Architects:

> "In colouring, Appelles, in design
> I rivalled Buonarrotti; nay, surpassed
> Even nature; into all my forms I cast
> Such strength, life, motion, flesh, bone, outward-shine."[3]

How changed were times since the days of the

[1] See Vasari's Lives, etc.—V. Document.

[2] On the last day of October, 1517, Luther published his Theses against Indulgences at Wirtemberg.

[3] Trans. by Rev. J. Kenyon, P.P. We subjoin the original:—

> "Appelle nel colore, e'l Buonarroto
> Imitai nel disegno; e la natura
> Vinsi, dando vigor'n ogni figura
> E carne, e ossa, e pelle, e spirti, e moto."

Angelico! The epitaph on that most pious artist's sepulchre told not how he had rivalled Zeuxis or Apelles in painting, but how he bestowed on the poor—the living images of Christ—all that he had earned by the exercise of his pencil; and how the heavens now possessed that soul which had shadowed forth the semblances of the blessed here below. This was a eulogium befitting a Christian painter. Fra Bartolommeo, tis true, did not equal him in artistic power, but his virtues were akin to these of the Angelico; and the contemporaries of the friar of San Marco bestowed on him nothing more than the praise he deserved, when they summed up all his excellences in the few words, "Into all his forms he cast

. . . . . Strength, life, motion, flesh, bone, outward-shine."

After all that has been said of Porta's life and works we will not indulge in any further reflections; but deeming it well to recapitulate a little, and to sum up the chief characteristics of this artist, we will say that he was most chaste in design; crude, it is true, in his earliest productions, elegant in his second, and somewhat exaggerated in his last. In the science of chiaroscuro he was most learned, not, however, to the exclusion of a charge of ostentation, particularly in some paintings in his third manner. In his draperies, I think, that he surpassed all his competitors of the Florentine school, and especially in those paintings in which he followed the manner and style of Da Vinci and Raffaello. But his chiefest excellence was in colouring, in which he may be said to have rivalled the best amongst the Venetians. From all this I conclude that no one will deny him the merit of having given to the Florentine school that most principal element in which it was so signally defective. For, although it excelled many of the

Italian schools in gracefulness, beauty of design, and philosophy of composition, nevertheless, it was inferior to many of them in colouring; but influenced by the friar of San Marco, Mariotto Albertinelli, and Ridolfo del Ghirlandajo, it recovered itself from this serious deficiency. Nor was that influence confined to the school of Florence, for it reached even the Roman, as Porta may be said to have been the master of Raffaello, who was its father and founder. Nor are we to forget Porta's versatility of genius, when we remember how happily he imitated Vinci, Raffaello, the Venetians, and Buonarroti, thus creating a new style, which may be said to have been common to them all and peculiar to him alone. But, had we no other proof of Porta's glory, I imagine that the friendship which subsisted between Raffaello and him ought to be sufficient to establish it. We will not pass over in silence a service which he rendered to artists: 'twas he who invented that wooden instrument, or model, which the French call *manichino* and the Italians *Tieni-pieghe;* an accessory of great importance, by means of which the painter or sculptor is enabled to arrange and dispose draperies without the intervention of the living subject.[1]

It now remains for us to enumerate the cartoons and original designs which have survived Fra Bartolommeo, and the many *razzias* that have been made in Italy since his times; and also to mention the names of those who were his imitators and disciples. We shall thus close this chapter and this Life.

[1] At the suppression of the convent of S. Catherine of Siena, in Via Larga, a very ancient model in wood, all moth eaten, was found, and it is thought that it belonged to Fra Bartol., from whom it passed to the paintress Nelli. It is now in the academy of Florence. Vasari says that he himself became possessed of it.

After Fra Bartolommeo's death, his designs and cartoons remained in the hands of Fra Paolino da Pistoja, as Vasari tells us. As long as he lived he made more use of them than, perhaps, he ought, in all his paintings; and, before dying, he handed them over to the Dominican nun, Sister Plautilla Nelli. From the hands of this paintress they passed into the possession of Niccolo Gaburri, and they were at last purchased by a Mr. Kant, and removed to England. Florence retains the following cartoons in the hall where the Academy of Design holds its annual exhibitions.

Marked 6 and 8 are two exquisite figures of S. M. Magdalene and S. Cath., of Siena, which served for the picture of S. Romano, in Lucca. No. 7 is a cartoon, with a S. Dominic life size, which belongs to an unknown picture—'tis somewhat injured. 11 is the Blessed Costanzo da Fabriano. 12, the Ven. Lorenzo da Ripafratta, who was novitiate Master to S. Antonino and the blessed Angelico. 20, Cardinal Giovanni Dominici. 21, the Blessed Antonio Neyrot Martyr. These four portraits are half figures, and they must have served for the likenesses of the same, which were painted in S. Antonino's cell (in S. Marco), and which Dom. Maccarini (in his life of the holy Archbishop) says he saw there. These of the Angelico and Pietro Capucci (the Blessed) are wanting.[1] Marked 22 is a cartoon, with S. Math. the Apostle. 23 is that of a female Saint (unknown). 26 and 27 are two most beautiful cartoons of the Apostles, Peter and Paul, coloured in Rome for Fra Mariano Fetti. 37, a Holy Family. 44, an Angel with a candelabrum, which is attributed to the same painter. They make 13 in all; and are admirably preserved.

[1] Vita di Sant Antonino, lib. vi. c. 2.

Still greater is the number of designs by our Friar, now in Florence. In the grand collection of original designs, by the most celebrated painters of Italy, which amounts to 27,838, and which are kept in the gallery of the Uffizj, there are 72 by Fra Bartol., and as one-half of these has the designs on both sides, they make, altogether, over one hundred. Some of these are executed with a pen, and others with a lead pencil. The most beautiful are these done with the pen, and they are in height from six to seven inches. We will content ourselves with mentioning a few of them.

There is the figure of a woman (a back view), which is said to have been used in the Abduction of Dina—then comes another, a very beautiful one, of a woman kneeling and praying, 'tis a part of the picture of the Virgin del Patrocinio, at Lucca.—Another part of the same picture, *i. e.*, the Virgin, and a beautiful group of mothers, with their children.—Various studies of nude infants. Studies for the two grand pictures of the Virgin del Baldacchino, one of which is in San Marco, and the other in the Pitti; from which we learn that Fra Bartol. first painted his figures in the nude, and then draped them—Designs of Holy Families—a S. Jerom, very like that which the Angelico coloured in the chapter-room of San Marco—A design of the Assumption—another of a glorified Virgin, with a troop of Angels dancing around her—a little design of Christ arisen—Christ in the garden, and the sleeping disciples, together with many others now in the possession of private individuals in Florence. A short time ago, an Englishman bought, at Rome, 20 original designs, by Fra Bartol., for 400 dollars; and, I believe, that amongst these, were some studies of the inferior part of the Last Judgment, commenced by Porta, in S. Maria Novella, and finished by

M. Albertinelli. Milan possesses some, partly in the Ambrosian library, along with others, by Lionardo, and partly in the mansion of Signor Giuseppe Vallardi. Whosoever would desire to know the merits of Fra Bartolommeo's designs, let him see these that I have numbered, and he will surely discover that grace and spirit, which we occasionally find wanting in some of his paintings; and, indeed, the contemplation of them will clearly establish the affinity between him and Raffaello.

Having spoken of his designs and cartoons, let us now mention those who were his imitators and disciples. Of the latter, Vasari mentions four, and they are:—Cecchino del Frate, Benedetto Cianfanini, Gabriele Rusticci, and Fra Paolino da Pistoja; but the imitators of the Friar far outshine his disciples. Foremost amongst those is M. Albertinelli, who, according to Lanzi, so resembled Fra Bartol., that they seem to have been two rivers rising from one common source—one of them, indeed, a fordable river, and the other spreading itself out into vastness.[1] Some of the paintings by Mariotto, as, for example, that executed for Fetti, in San Silvestro, are characterised by harshness. In others, where he imitated Fra Bartol. in boldness of colouring, and heaviness of shading, he fell into the greatest exaggerations; and of this class is an Annunciation of the Virgin, in the Florentine Academy, marked No. 51: a work which cost the artist so much labour, that he commenced it twice. But whosoever has seen the stupendous painting, now in the gallery of the Uffizj, I mean the Visitation of S. Elizabeth, and the very beautiful Crucifixion, will not deny Albertinelli a place amongst the most distinguished Italian painters. Had his industry been equal to his

[1] Hist. of Painting, Flor. School, Epoch, 2nd.

genius, and if he had not abandoned palette and pencil for the wine-bench and the flaggon, he must have become a great master in the pictorial art. The second and happiest imitator of Fra Bartol., is Ridolfo del Ghirlandajo, who, as Vasari says, was also his disciple in colouring.[1] What promise did not this artist give? What an evidence of his genius and art has he not left us in the miracle of S. Zanobi, which, placed beside the Visitation, by Mariotto, announces the excellence of the master, whose grand picture in the Council-Hall is opposite to them! For my own part, I think that if Ghirlandajo had accepted Raffaello's invitation, and gone to Rome, he must have surpassed all the Florentine artists of his time; but in youth he tired of painting, and abandoned the easel for the counting-desk.

The last amongst the followers and imitators of Fra Bartol. was Giovanni Antonio Sogliani, a pupil of Lorenzo di Credi, a most eminent painter, to whom Rio should have given a distinguished place in his work on Christian Art; for, as a virtuous man, he rivalled those who were distinguished for piety, and like *the Friar*, and Credi, he imparted to the countenances of his Saints a reflex of eternal glory. He sometimes walked in the footprints of Porta, and with happiest results, as we are informed by Lanzi, who, I think, did not see the grand fresco that Sogliani painted in the refectory of San Marco. He here frescoed a passage in the history of S. Dominic—it is that wherein an angel is said to have ministered food to the nascent community, when they lacked the means of subsistence. This work is well executed, and bears such a strong resemblance to Porta's manner, that we are almost tempted to believe that the latter painted it,

[1] See Life of Fra Bartol., and of Ridolfo del Ghirlandajo.

particularly the upper part, in which there is a Crucifixion, with the B. V. M., S. John, S. Antonino, and S. Catherine of Siena, all very beautiful figures: to these we might add Bugiardini, who sometimes took Fra Bartol. for his model, and successfully imitated Lionardo and Angelo, though not so happily as did Sogliani. Let this suffice as to the imitators and disciples of Fra Bartolommeo.

SUMMARY OF THE PAINTINGS

BY

FRA BARTOLOMMEO DELLA PORTA,

TAKEN FROM AN ANCIENT MS., IN THE ARCHIVES OF

SAN MARCO, FLORENCE,

ENTITLED

REGISTRY, (B.)

Commencing 1493, *and terminating in* 1516.

"M.D.XVI., (fol. 127.) I hereinafter record all the Paintings that have been executed by Fra Bartol. di Pagolo, of Florence, and a Friar of San Marco—*i. e.*, all the works he executed, whether on wood, canvas, or walls, together with his large and small pictures; and on one side I will place the works by which he has earned money; and on the other, such as were not sold, and which were either executed for our churches, or presented as gifts, to individuals. And I do this in *perpetuam rei memoriam*, that the friars of the present and future times may know his works, and learn that he was not indolent, and how (with the Lord's aid), he made himself useful, and what honour he reflected on his convent and brotherhood. 'Dominus qui incepit, ipse perficiet.' And all the undermentioned Paintings are catalogued in

a book in possession of said Fra Bartol., the Painter.[1] And I, Fra Bartol., Cavalcanti, Syndic of said convent, and Friar, have, with my own hand, entered all the following Paintings:—"

PAINTINGS WHICH WERE SOLD.

Imprimis—Said Fra Bartol. di Pagolo painted two pictures of about two braccia each, in one of which is the head of Yhus, (Jesus), in the other, the Virgin, for Hieronimo da Casi, of Bologna, for which he received fifteen ducats.

He likewise painted a picture of about one braccio, in which there is S. M. Magdalene, with Yhus (Jesus) in the garden. It was sold to Dom. Perini for forty-four gold ducats.

He also painted a small picture, (about half a braccio,) in which there is a Nativity. It was sold to Dom. Perini, to be sent into France. He got for it thirty ducats, as appears from his (Fra Bartolommeo's) book.

Item—A picture for Bernardo del Bianco, of about four braccia. This was placed in the Abbey, and he got for it one hundred ducats.

Item—A picture, for the Guild de' Contemplanti, for which they defrayed all the expenses, and gave him fifty ducats.

Item—A picture of about four and-a-half braccia high, in which there is the Virgin, and S. Catherine of Siena, with many other Saints. The Signory gave it to a French Ambassador, named Monsignor di Otton, . . . bishop of . . . (name wanting); and it was in the month of April, 1512, that the Signory gave for said picture, three hundred gold ducats, although it was worth more, as appears by the credit and debit book of said convent.[2]

[1] This book has escaped all my researches.

[2] Vasari speaks of this picture in the following terms:—"In the Abbey of the Black Friars, at Arezzo, Fra Bartol. painted the head of Christ for the Contemplanti. It was a long time in the possession of Ottavian de Medici, and has now been placed in the chapel of that house, by his son, Alessandro." At present, we know not where it is.

Item—He gained, by his partnership with Mariotto, son of Biagio, the Painter, two hundred and twelve gold ducats. It was during this partnership that he painted the picture which has been sent to Flanders, and which a certain Signor Ferrino caused to be executed. There was also a picture for the cathedral of Lucca, and one for our convent in Pisa, and the picture for Averardo Salviati, and another for Giuliano da Gagliano. From all these he derived, during the partnership, which lasted about three years, two hundred and twelve ducats. During said time he painted many other pictures that were placed to the general account of the partnership. (On the margin, we read, that after all deductions, he cleared two hundred and twelve ducats).

Item—As an instalment for the picture destined for the palace of the Signory, (which he designed), the Friars have received one hundred ducats.

Item—An oval picture of two braccia, in which there was a Nativity, sold to Giovanni Bernardini, of Lucca. for twenty gold ducats.

Item—For a picture of about four braccia, executed for San Martino de Lunigiana, (this was placed in the church of San Stefano,) he received, in part payment, twenty-seven gold ducats.

Item—For a picture which Fra Sebastiano de Monte Cathini caused to be executed for our church in Lucca, one hundred and thirty gold ducats.

Item—For a picture of one braccio and one-third, for the church of San Stefano, (the entry is here very unintelligible,) in the style of the Lucchese, sixteen gold ducats.

Item—For a picture on canvas, for the General of Valombrosa, twelve ducats.

Item—For a picture, in height, brac . . . for the church of the Nunziata, belonging to the Servites, which Salvatore Billi caused to be executed; one hundred ducats.

PAINTINGS BY WHICH HE EARNED NO MONEY.

Imprimis—Said Fra Bartol. painted a picture of about one braccio, in which is Jesus with the Samaritan; this passed into the possession of Hieronymo da Casi, of Bologna, who sold it to the Duke of Mantua for sixty ducats.

Item—Two small pictures for a book, in which there was a Nativity on one side, and a Crucifixion with the Virgin and S. John. It was given to Zanobi Gaddi, by the Prior, Father Santi; valued at sixteen ducats.

Item—A picture presented to Baldo Inghilani; valued at fifteen ducats.

Item—Two pictures, of about a braccio each, in one of which was a head of Jesus, and in the other a Virgin, of the value of fourteen ducats; they were given to Pier Soderini, when he was Gonfalonier, at the time he made us a present of the bell; valued at fourteen ducats.[1]

Item—A picture of about one braccio, in which there was a Nativity with angels and landscape; valued at fifty ducats. It was given to Giovanni de Medici, now Pope. (Leo X.)

Item—A picture on canvas, of about two braccia, in which he painted a Virgin, with the Infant and S. Joseph; valued at eight ducats. It was given to the Nuns of Santa Lucia.

Item—Two little pictures, in one of which was a head of Jesus, and in the other a Virgin; valued at five ducats. It was given to the convent of Prato.

Item—Two small pictures for a book, in which there is a Crucifixion, with the Virgin and S. John; the second has a Nativity; valued at sixteen ducats. Fra Bartol. da Faenza gave it to his brother.

[1] Chapter iii., of this volume. The people called the bell of San Marco La Piagnona, because it was rung when the Arabbiati besieged that edifice. It was taken from the the campanile by Tanai Nerbi, June 30th, 1498, and was thence carried off to the church of S. Francis. In 1509 the Pope caused the Franciscans to restore it to the Dominicans.

Item—He painted a picture of about four and-a-half braccia in height, for Piero Cambi; valued at one hundred and thirty ducats. It is now in San Marco, over the altar of S. Peter Martyr.[1]

Item—Two pictures of about four braccia high, in one of which is a S. Peter; and in the other S. Paul; valued at about thirty ducats. But as the S. Peter is imperfect, I set it down at twenty-five. They were both given to the church of San Silvestro.

Item—A S. George, designed in oil, in the house of Pugliese; as it is not finished, I do not determine its value.

Item—A picture six and-a-half braccia high, representing S. Catherine of Siena, S. Mary Magdalene, God the Father, and four Angels. It was destined for the convent of Murano, but it is now in our convent, at Lucca; it is worth about ninety gold ducats.

Item—A picture of about six braccia high, with . . . figures. It is now in the church of S. Marco, over the altar of S. Catherine of Siena. It is worth more than four hundred gold ducats.

Item—A S. Vincent, which is over the door leading to the Sacristy; it is worth sixteen ducats.

Item—A picture of about two braccia and three quarters, in which there is a Virgin with the Infant. The Prior gave it to Bernardo de' Medici; it is valued at sixteen ducats.

Item—A picture of three and a quarter braccia, beautifully ornamented. This was given to Lorenzo dei Medici, together with the Madonna and Angels; value one hundred ducats.

Item—A picture of six braccia in height; it is a S. Mark, executed for our convent (San Marco); it is valued at forty ducats.

Item—A Crucifixion, of about two and-a-half braccia, which Fra Filippo Strozzi gave to Francesco del Pugliese; valued at fifteen ducats.

[1] The Cambi family had their burial-place in the church of San Marco. The convent of the Nuns of Sta Lucia, no longer exists. Mention is made of it in one of the preceding entries.

Item—A picture of four and-a-half braccia high, in which is S. Sebastian, with an Angel. It is now in our church of San Marco; valued at twenty ducats.

Item—A very small picture, in which is a S. Jerom. This was painted at the request of Fra Hieronymo Rossi, then Prior of San Marco; valued at seven ducats.

Item—A picture of about two and-a-half braccia, in which there is a Madonna with the Infant. This was given to Alfonsina de' Medici; valued at twenty-five ducats.[1]

[1] This quaint catalogue informs us of many works by Fra Bartol. not mentioned by Vasari. Nevertheless, many paintings of a later period have not been inserted by the Syndic. Here, for example, there is no mention of the Deposition from the Cross, which Fra Bartol. repeated frequently. The Syndic has also omitted the Assumption, painted for Prato; and the picture in the novitiate of S. Marco.

CHAPTER IX.

Fra Giovanni Giocondo, of Verona. Architect, Engineer, and Antiquarian.

We will now narrate the life of a celebrated architect, who was the singular ornament of his age, and whose wonderful genius did as much for the revival of Greek and Latin architecture, as did that of Leon Battista Alberti, or Fra Francesco Colonna, both of whom he excelled in the vast amount of his learning. He certainly was the foremost man in the science of military fortifications, for which he has been praised by Sammicheli, Falconetto, Budeo, and others, who were deeply skilled in such matters. He was, moreover, very learned in hydraulics, and in this particular branch may be said to have equalled Lionardo da Vinci. This architect was called Fra Giocondo, a name so great, that it epitomises the whole cycle of Italian glory during the sixteenth century. He was thoroughly master of all sciences, human and divine; familiarly conversant with the literature of Greece and Rome; in antiquities he had no compeer; in mathematics he was most renowned; natural history was not unknown to him; he was well versed in polite literature; and amongst the admirers of his varied talents were Julius II., Leo X., the Emperor Maximilian, Louis XII., King of France, Lorenzo de' Medici, and all the most illustrious men of his age. In fact, reading the life of Fra Giocondo, we may almost fancy that we are perusing the entire history of our arts

and literature. It was on this account that Cæsar Scaliger did not hesitate to pronounce him "*An old and new library of all that was good in science*," and that he elsewhere speaks of him as a "*Phœnix of intellects*." Vasari terms him a most rare man, and universally learned in all the said faculties; and he adds, that he undertook to write his life, not only for the benefit of artists, but of the whole world. No matter how much any one may disrespect the Conventual Orders, I hold that the name of Fra Giocondo must command veneration. His age, it is true—for it was an age of celebrities—may point to his equal, but it cannot exhibit any one who was superior to him: indeed, we think ourselves unequal to this subject, and our previous studies will not permit us to treat it worthily. We will, therefore, confine ourselves to a narrative of his life and works; and if we shall have aided in dissipating the clouds that overhang the history of this distinguished artist, we will console ourselves with the thought of having rendered no trifling service to letters and arts.

But before we begin to write of Fra Giovanni Giocondo, we must needs touch a question which originated with Tiraboschi, and has been a subject of controversy during the past century, amongst the learned, who, for want of the opportune notices, have not been able to arrive at any satisfactory solution of the difficulty. The question is, whether Fra Giocondo was a Dominican or Franciscan Friar, or merely a secular priest. This question, which under other circumstances, might appear to be of no moment, is, nevertheless, of great importance here, as we are not anxious to be charged with reaping other people's harvest. Even though we be not able to remove all doubts, we fancy we shall have done some service by setting forth the

claims which, in our opinion, the Order of S. Dominic has on this illustrious religious.

Before Tiraboschi mooted the subject, everybody believed that Fra Giocondo was a member of the Order of Preaching-Friars. Nor was there any importance attached to the mere assertion of Budeo, how grave soever his authority may be, who styles him a simple priest: as it was commonly thought that in order to attend to the construction of the many edifices at which he was engaged, he might have left off the habit of his Order for a while—as did many other members of the religious houses in these times, when their rigorous discipline had been relaxed.[1] Two writers, if not contemporaries, certainly near the period of Giocondo, term him a Dominican—and these are Vasari and Panvinio: the former, in his "Lives of the Painters, Sculptors, and Architects," where he affirms that he had ample notices of this distinguished artist, as he easily might, from Donatto Gianmotti, whom he quotes, and who had been Giocondo's intimate in France, and Vasari's in Italy; the second, a most learned writer, records him amongst the illustrious men of Verona, and says, without doubt, that he was a Dominican.[2] Fathers Razzi and Rovetta followed Vasari; and Scipione Maffei, in his "Verona Illustrated," repeats all that Fathers Echard and Quietif[3]

[1] Fra Giovanni Montorsoli, of the Servites; Don Giulio Clovio, the Canon of the Lateran; Fra Marco Pensabene, the Dominican; his confrere, Fra Guglielmo di Marcillat, and other religious artists, cast off their habits at that period.

[2] Onuphrii Panvinii Veronens, Antiq. Ver. lib. vii. "Fr. J. Jocundus, of Verona, of the Order of Preaching Friars, a most eloquent and learned man, and the intimate of Lorenzo the Magnificent, has left us many monuments of his genius."

[3] Maffei, Verona Illustrata. Echard and Quietif, Bibliotheca, Script. Ord Præd. v. ii.

had written on the life and works of Giocondo. Moreover, when Scaliger called Giocondo a Franciscan, Echard, Monnoye, and Maffei replied to him by stating that as Scaglier was farther removed from the age of Giocondo than were Vasari and Panvinio, and that as he was a very inaccurate writer, they could not prefer him to the two former. It is true that Julius Cæsar Scaliger, father of Joseph, was a disciple of Fra Giocondo; but he does not say whether he was a Franciscan or Dominican: he does nothing more than laud him for his genius, calling him a *most accomplished Scotist;*[1] being anxious, perhaps, to extol his powers of disputation, and likening him to Duns Scotus, the Minorite, whose subtlety is so universally known. To these grave authorities Tiraboschi first, and after him Father G. Della Valle, of the Minorites, opposed in favour of the Franciscans the grave assertion of Luca Paccioli, of the same Order, and a celebrated mathematician, who, lecturing in Venice on the Fifth Book of Euclid, and mentioning all the most distinguished Franciscans who frequented his school—numbers amongst them, Fra Giovanni Giocondo, of Verona. This authority, unknown to Fathers Echard and Quietif, and even to Maffei, is of great importance, as Paccioli states what came under his own notice: whereas, Vasari and Panvinio did not know Giocondo personally.[2] When the argument had gone this length, Father G. Della Valle looked on the controversy as ended, and plumed himself thereon. But Tiraboschi discovered another authority in favour of the Dominicans,[3]

[1] Apud Echard loc. cit.

[2] See Vasari's Life of Fra Giocondo, and particularly the edition published in Siena, 1792, the VII. vol. of which contains a discourse delivered by F. Della Valle, in Turin, 1792.

[3] Tiraboschi: Tomo 6, c. iii., lib. 3. Temanza states, that this authority

perhaps as conclusive as that of Paccioli, and this was Sauval the Frenchman, who, citing the Registry of the French Parliament, and particularly that enactment which relates to the building of the bridge of Notre Dame, says that it was entrusted to Fra Giocondo, whom he calls a Dominican.[1] I am sorry to say that Father Della Valle, who quotes Tiraboschi when favorable to him, suppresses the authority of Sauval, and the reflections made on it by the grand historian of our literature in behalf of the Preaching-Friars. We possess, however, two documents of the period of our architect, one of which styles him a Franciscan, and the other a Dominican. This, in my opinion, should moderate Father Della Valle's exultation. But what would he have said had he seen the true portrait of Giocondo in the habit of a Dominican? For the discovery of this we are indebted to Father Dom. Federici, who communicated it to Temanza the architect, who speaks of it in the following terms:—"The Council Hall of Verona must have been the work of Fra Giocondo, nor do I know anything to the contrary. Moreover, on the pedestal of the second order of the façade, near the corner of the street called 'Foglie,' we have his portrait in basrelief. It represents a friar with the tunic, scapular, and cappuccio of a Dominican, perusing an open volume whereon we read this inscription, 'C. Pli. Veron. E.' The left hand, the

was known to Maffei; but after repeatedly consulting the Verona Illustrata, "I have not been able to find any proof of it."

[1] Tirabos. loc. cit. "Sauval relies on the Registry of the Parliament, in which he says, he finds mention of Frere Jean Joyeux, a Dominican, whom he believes to be identical with Fra Giocondo. . . . . Wherefore, if Jean Joyeux be *the* Giocondo, we must take it for granted, that he was, at least for some time, a Dominican;" and we will remark, that if this Joyeux be not the identical Giocondo, it must be admitted, that the French government charged a Dominican architect to construct the bridge of Notre Dame.

fore-finger of which points to the inscription, covers the space that should be occupied by the letters which ought to follow the E. In a word, we should read 'C. Plinii Veronensis Epistolae.'" The Dominican habit and inscription attest that *it is he*.[1] In fact, to what other member of the order of S. Dominic could the city of Verona have erected such a splendid monument, or what other could it have represented with Pliny's Epistles, since Fra Giocondo's was most certainly the first and most complete edition of them? Surely, no one will imagine that the French parliament, or Verona could have been ignorant of the Institute to which this distinguished architect and antiquarian belonged.

Such reasonings as these rendered the solution of the doubt not only difficult but hopeless: wherefore, as peace-makers between combatants, and hoping rather to set aside, than to solve the question, the Marquis Poleni and Temanza interposed their kindly offices, stating that Fra Giocondo was a Dominican Friar, who arbitrarily returned to the world, and was universally called a priest, as Budeo writes; and that he finally sought retirement in the cloisters of the Franciscans. This would lead us to conclude that he had been, at different periods, a Dominican, a secular priest, and a Franciscan. This solution, though it has some difficulties, appears to us to be reasonable, and we therefore receive it as the truest;[2] so much

[1] Vite Dei piu celebri, Architetti, &c. There was a portrait of Giocondo in the Council Hall of Venice, painted by Tiziano, but it was destroyed by fire in 1577.—V. Tipaldo Elogio di Fra Giocondo.

[2] If Verona caused Fra Giocondo's likeness to be sculptured, we must presume that it was done after his death, as it was not usual to confer such honours on the living; and, as we find him clothed in the Dominican habit, it is but reasonable to suppose that he was buried in it. This confuses the question still more.

the more as it coincides with what Scaliger says, in a letter dated 1594, in which he tells us that his father was a pupil of Giocondo, and that the latter taught him grammar and polite literature; adding, that he *subsequently became a Franciscan*. From all this I would conclude, that it was only in his mature years he took the Minorite habit, leaving us to suppose that he had enrolled himself amongst the Dominicans when very young. This transition from one Order to another was no uncommon fact at that period, and history records many examples of it.

Having thus solved these difficulties, we now resume the narrative of the life and works of our antiquarian-architect. But we must first express our sorrow, that this illustrious Italian has found no biographer amongst his own countrymen; so much so that if it were not for the precious fragments of his life transmitted to us by Vasari, the Tuscan, we should know nothing more of Giocondo than his works, as Panvinio, the Veronese, merely makes passing mention of it; and Maffei, as has been said already, has in great part copied Echard and Quietif. We are, therefore, obliged to acknowledge our ignorance of the year in which he was born, of a great portion of his life—nay, and of the year of his death, and place of his sepulchre.

Temanza and Milizia state that he was born A. D. 1435;[1] Masselli in 1453;[2] but a very ancient document that we will produce, would have us believe that he saw the light about 1430; for it distinctly states that in 1514 he had overpassed his eightieth year. Nobody has ever denied that Verona was his birth-place; but even though J. Cæsar Scaliger affirms that he came of noble

[1] Temanza, Milizia, Degli architetti antichi, &c., vol. I. 3.

[2] Masselli's Notes to Vasari.

lineage, we have every reason to suspect the truth of this writer's assertion. Father Orlandi, in his "Pictorial Alphabet," represents Fra Giocondo to have been the brother of Francesco Monsignori, the Veronese painter, evidently confounding Fra Gerolamo Monsignori, the Dominican painter, whose life we have given, with Fra Giovanni Giocondo.[1] Federici says that he was a member of the Ognibene[2] family; but I entirely agree with Emilio Tipaldo, who states that Giocondo was his cognomen.[3]

Some historians, in the absence of authentic documents, take special delight in forming conjectures, and there are some so bold in this instance, that they never fail to collect an abundant harvest. We will not follow them in such vagaries, but will rather confine ourselves to the few, yet precious, memorials that have survived our Giocondo. His singular acquirements in letters, human and divine, his philological powers, together with his copious and recondite erudition, plainly manifest that he possessed a most vigorous intellect, that he applied himself intensely to his studies, and that he was indoctrinated by the ablest masters.

At that period the Dominican Order counted many most distinguished members, who were thoroughly versed in all the sciences, and particularly in the study of antiquities, and of the primitive languages. Not to speak of

[1] Temanza loc. cit., p. 35. This assertion is founded on an edition of Vitruvius, that he mentions in a catalogue of books on Italian architecture—its title runs thus:—"X. Books of Vitruvius's Architecture. . . . With the ornamentations of Fra Giocondo Monsignori, the Dominican." This edition was unknown to Poleni.

[2] This is a mere gratuitous assertion, made by Federici to Temanza, who says that he found mention of a certain Frater Joannes de Omnibono de Verona, ad ann., 1449. This, surely, cannot have been Fra Giocondo.

[3] Elogio, p. 10.

that illustrious phalanx of theologians headed by the celebrated Cardinal Gaetano, the light and ornament of his own as well as of future times; we can point with pride to Santi Pagnini, and Agostino Giustiniani who were distinguished orientalists; to Annio da Viterbo who was far famed for his knowledge of antiquities, and to that Fra Francesco Colonna whose life we have already written. The invention of printing, and the brief period of calm which the Religious Orders enjoyed after the tempestuous schism that had so desolated the Church, awakened this fervid love of study in the bosoms of the Friars. If then we are to suppose, as Echard and Quietif do, that Giocondo enrolled himself among the Dominicans at an early period of his life, he may have had Fra Francesco Colonna[1] for his confrere and con-disciple in the study of the Greek language and antiquities. Giocondo, however, was far more provident than the whimsical author of the *Ipnerotomachia*, for instead of transmitting to posterity the treasures of antiquity clothed in such unbecoming language, which the polished Perticari has designated as shameless, he determined to adorn them with the pure and lofty dialect of Latium; deeming it ignoble to treat of the remains of Latin intellect and workmanship in any other than such periods as fell from the lips and stylus of Tully. To the study of antiquities they both united that of Architecture; and as the sixteenth century had resolved to emancipate itself from the Gothic and Lombard styles and traditions, and to revive the classic elegance of the Greeks and Romans; these two Friars, instead of obstinately clinging to *progress*, became the most energetic advocates of Vitruvius' doctrines. But Giocondo also studied military fortification.

[1] Colonna was born A.D., 1433. See vol I. of these Memoirs, Book 2.

and he paid the more particular attention to this branch, as his country was then laid desolate by the swords and torches of foreign and native marauders. We are told by Vasari that he travelled over all Italy, and that he tarried a long time at Rome. Let us hear this author: "Applying himself to the study of antiquities, and minutely examining the ancient buildings, and the inscriptions on the sepulchres and other venerable monuments in Rome and its suburbs, nay, and everywhere throughout Italy, he collected in a very beautiful volume the said inscriptions, and sent it, according to the Veronese themselves, to Lorenzo the Magnificent." This is the first and most authenticated memoir that we have of Fra Giocondo. According to Panvinio,[1] the Latin inscriptions exceeded two thousand. This collection, which has merited the eulogies of Gruter and Sigonio, was pronounced by Maffei to be the most precious and perfect work of the Veronese antiquarian.[2] In the dedication to Lorenzo de' Medici he signs himself "Frater Jocundus Veronensis," which proves that he was then a friar. Now as Lorenzo de' Medici died in 1492, we may remark with Poleni that said dedication must have been written some time before this date; and Tiraboschi observes that it was composed at Rome, and was thence transmitted to Florence.[3]

About 1492, if Giuseppe Scaliger states the truth, Fra Giocondo was in the Castle of Lodrone, in the Trentine Alps, as appears by a letter of the said Scaliger, in which, narrating the life of his father, he says, that when a mere boy he was taught grammar by Giocondo, who had taken refuge in their castle, which was situated

[1] Anales. Veronens, loc. cit. [2] Verona Illustrata, l. iii.
[3] Storia della Lett. Ital. loc. cit.

between Trento and Brescia.[1] We can easily determine the year thus:—Julius Scaliger was born in 1484, and we cannot fancy that he could have applied himself to the study of grammar, under such an able preceptor, before he was eight years of age. We cannot, therefore, agree with Echard who says that Scaliger was initiated in the Greek language by Giocondo, about 1490, as the pupil was then only six years old, an age at which he could have done little more than lisp his maternal idiom, not to mention Greek, which he could not have mastered then. I do not know to what Temanza alludes, when he says that Fra Giocondo was in communication with Louis Duke of Orleans in 1495, during his sojourn at Asti, where he contemplated the conquest of the Duchy of Milan. He does not quote any authority for this assertion, and we, therefore, will not vouch for the fact. But though Giocondo may not have gone to Asti at that period, it seems certain, nevertheless, that in the following year he set out from Italy for the French capital.[2] This truly learned man added to the vast stores of his acquirements in every region that he visited, to the inestimable advantage of the republic of letters; and whilst in Paris he searched the ancient libraries and discovered a complete collection of the Letters of the Second Pliny, only a few of which, owing to the ignorance of the amanuenses, had been hitherto given to the public. Having collated them with the best codices, and dili-

[1] Scaliger, Epist. Kal., June xiv., MDXCIV. "The child Julius, reared on the paternal territory, together with his brother, Titus, learned the first rudiments of letters and grammar from Giocondo, who was a client of the family. He was a most learned and exemplary man. He subsequently joined the Franciscans." Ap. Echard. loc. cit. p. 37.

[2] Loc. cit. p. 57. Temanza thinks that he set out for France even before 1490.

gently corrected them, he published and dedicated them to the said Duke of Orleans, who had recently ascended the throne with the title of Louis XII. Critics are wont to raise a question concerning the place and time of this publication. Tipaldo quotes an edition published in Bologna in 1498;[1] but Echard does not notice the Bolognese edition, and records only that which saw the light in Venice, A. D. 1508.[2] This edition is known as the Aldine. It is certain, however, that Fra Giocondo had nothing to do with the edition of 1498; and this is clearly proved by Tiraboschi, who, quoting a letter from Aldo Manuzio, prefixed to the Venetian edition, affirms that he was merely the publisher of the letters discovered by Fra Giocondo, from whom he had received the additions, variations, and corrections.[3] Whilst Giocondo was diligently investigating the remains of Roman grandeur, and illustrating the most distinguished writers of Latium, (for indeed in an incredibly short period he had annotated and published many of them) he never forgot his beloved study of architecture; for even as early as 1500 we find him in the French capital, styled with the title of Royal Architect. It was at this period that he began to lecture on Vitruvius, but whether in public or private I have not been able to ascertain. For the elucidation of that very obscure text, he availed himself and his scholars of a great number of architectural designs which related to the subjects of which he treated; and this we have on the authority of Budeo, who was his disciple, and recorded the fact in his work on the Pandects.[4] At this time the ancient bridge of Paris was

[1] Elogio di Fra Giocondo.

[2] Bibliotheca Script. Ord. Prædicat. vol 2, p. 36.

[3] Storia della Lett. Ital. loc. cit. ix.

[4] Annotat. in Pandectas apud Echard. "It was our good fortune to have

in a ruinous state, and the king employed Giocondo to rebuild it. Concerning this work, that was certainly amongst the grandest of our architect, we will follow the narrative of Emilio de Tipaldo:—

"November 25, 1499, the old bridge, near the magnificent cathedral, (Notre Dame,) tumbled into the water, and then and there were five persons killed; because, as it was generally said, an artillerist had slain his mother there a year before. The prefect of the city, and others, who were found guilty of negligence, not being able to pay the fine, were cast into prison; and it was resolved that a new bridge should be built. As there were no houses then in the island of Notre Dame, it was ordained that the stones should be quarried there, and that there, also, the workmen should prepare the wood necessary for the work. . . . . Many furnished designs and counsel; and, indeed, there came a considerable number of architects from Blois and Alvernia, for this purpose." This proves to us, that Paris, though abounding in noble monuments, had not then any great amount of artists. The fact is, that an assembly, at which Fra Gioioso (as the French call him) was present, determined to build a bridge of three arches, constructing another out of what remained of the old bridge. Therefore, on the 20th of July, 1504, in obedience to the advice of Fra Gioioso, "*Reconstructor of stone edifices*,"[1] and of Desirée di Felin, superintendent of the wood-work, it was determined that the arches should not have a

had for our master in the study of Vitruvius, the priest Giocondo. At that time he was the king's architect; he was a man thoroughly skilled in antiquities, and he graphically explained," etc.

[1] I find that Giocondo is thus designated in the Parisian Registry, and it was for this reason that Sauval doubted whether the friar was the *architect* of the same bridge.

perfectly circular form, in order that the ascent should be more facile. That the "Reconstructor" was also the architect, is proved by the stipend of 43 francs, which he received daily, for it was more, perhaps, than each of the eight boatmen received per month; it is also proved by this, that there was no architect employed who was superior to him; and if further proof be needed, we may find it in Budeo, his disciple, who styles him Royal Architect; and, also, in Sannazaro's epigram.[1] On the 10th of July, 1507, the first stone of the last arch was laid, and the whole work was completed in September, 1512. It cost more than one million six hundred and sixty thousand lire. According to Temanza, this bridge had five arches,[2] each with a span of 54 feet; and their height, above the level of the water, was at least 40 feet. The four isolated piers were 15½ feet in the solid. Their length, which determines the width of the bridge, is 82 feet, not comprising the triangular spurs, which were 12 feet high on both fronts; the vaults of the arches, which were pointed, were more than 4 feet thick.[3] The whole work

[1] Tipaldo Elogio, p. 15. Sannazzaro's distich runs thus:—

"Jucundus geminum imposuit tibi, Sequana, pontem,
Hunc tu jure potes dicere Pontificem!"

[2] In 1660, when this bridge was undergoing repairs, (regnante Lodovico XIV.) the following inscription, which no longer exists, was engraved:—

Jucundus facilem præbuit tibi, Sequana, pontem
Invicto ædiles flumine restituunt
Regnante Lodovico XIV.
Alexander de Sene Urbis Præfectus.

[3] We must say that the design was either frequently altered, or that the writers quoted have fallen into error, as Della Valle, citing Claude Malingre, says, that the sixth arch was finished July 10, 1507. Tipaldo states that this bridge had three arches, Temanza, five, and Malingre, six. We may observe, too, that there is some discrepancy between Tipaldo and Temanza, the former stating that the bridge was not to be of circular form; and the latter asserting that the arches were pointed.

was of stone, quarried in the vicinity. On both sides of the road, over the bridge, which was 26 feet wide, was a row of shops and houses, of four flats. When Scamozzo, the celebrated architect, was in Paris, in 1600, he admitted, that he nowhere saw any work superior to this. Sannazaro, J. Cæsar Scaliger, and Vasari, state that Fra Giocondo erected two bridges over the Seine. Some believe that the second was the *Pont Petit;* but Mariette, in a letter dated 1771, labours to prove that Fra Giocondo erected only one bridge. If we are to credit Vasari, we must believe that this architect constructed *an infinity of works for that king throughout his dominion;* but, he adds, that he omits mentioning them, in consideration of the two bridges, which were his grandest buildings. Tipaldo relates, that Giocondo designed the Castle de Gaillon, in Normandy, which was built in the Gothic style, in 1505; it belonged to the Cardinal D'Amboise, was afterwards the domicile of the Bishops of Rouen, and was finally destroyed in the time of the revolution. This is a clear proof that our Friar did not despise the Gothic architecture, much as he desiderated the revival of the Greek and Latin. He knew how to appreciate the beauties and perfections of that style, which some call Gothic, and others Teutonic. It was during his sojourn in Paris, that an incident, which is narrated by Vasari, occurred to Giocondo. The former had it from Donato Gianotti, the Florentine, *who was Giocondo's most intimate friend.* It is this:—Having got a peach-tree, he planted it in an earthen vase, and in a short time it yielded so much fruit, that he took special pleasure in looking at it. Having placed it on a spot where the king might see it as he passed, some of his retinue utterly

destroyed the plant, to the great chagrin of the good religious.[1]

After having spent many years superintending the building of the bridge, Giocondo proceeded to Venice in 1506, having been invited, as it would appear, to take charge of some important works entrusted to him by that Republic. The deposit of the Brenta being carried continuously into the Venetian lagoons, threatened their destruction, and great peril to the city. Vasari writes that Giocondo warned the authorities of the ruin that must befal them if they did not take timely precautions; wherefore, "Having assembled the most distinguished engineers and architects of Italy, many opinions were advanced, and many plans were suggested; but as Fra Giocondo's was pronounced to be the best, it was adopted. They then began to turn off (by means of excavations) two-thirds or one-half of the waters of the Brenta, which waters were now discharged into the lagoon of Chioggia." Temanza impugns this statement, and adduces various documents to prove that the new canal had been commenced as early as 1488, and that it was finished in 1495. This canal, now called the Brentone, cost 800,000 ducats; it is twenty-five miles long. Temanza adds that it was improved and lengthened by the architect Alessio Aleardi; but that as there remained much to be done to the emissary, the College of Senators, in 1506, invited Giocondo to express his opinion on all that had been executed, as well as on further improvements. Having examined the place, beginning at the emissary of Limena, (which was then in a bad condition,) he extended his observations on the right and left, as far as the lagoons and the sea. He then made an exact measurement of the level of the old

[1] Vasari, Life of Fra Giocondo.

bed of the Brenta, from Strà to the Dolo; and from the Dolo to Lizzafusina; and also from the Dolo, on the new canal, to Conche. After these considerations, Giocondo gave his opinion, which was—that the aforesaid excavation or deepening of the Brenta would give the water a less rapid descent than it should necessarily have through the old bed of the Lizzafusina; that its course, moreover, must be less impetuous, particularly as there were no outlets like the one which was constructed on the canal of Lizzafusina. (alla Mira.) He, therefore, maintained that this proceeding should turn all the waters of the Brenta into the new bed, and that they should, consequently, rise to the level of the circumjacent country—nay, and above it. In a word, he showed that this diversion must occasion a disaster, and not a benefit. He then exhorted them to open a passage for the waters of the new canal or Brentone, through the two channels of Fogolana and Petadibo, in order to give an exit to the new deepening; and thus our religious flattered himself with the hope of happy results. This opinion did not please the Republic, because Giocondo was opposed to the plan which the authorities had adopted, of turning off the sweet, yet turbid waters, from their estuaries. These discrepancies were continued till 1507; when Alcardi was entrusted with the execution of the old project. According to Maffei, Poleni, and Tiraboschi, there yet exist three dissertations by Fra Giocondo, directed to the "Magistracy of the Waters of Venice," on that arduous operation; and we would fain hope that some one may be induced to publish them.

Fra Giocondo remained two years in Venice, and perhaps it was at this period that he passed from the Dominicans to the Franciscans. Temanza, who was the first to determine the year of this fact, although he

contradicts himself elsewhere, was led to form the opinion on the authority of Fra Luca Paccioli, the Minorite, who, on the 11th day of August, A.D. 1508, when lecturing on the Fifth Book of Euclid, (said lectures being given at Venice,) asserted that he had, amongst his auditors, a man of his own institute, namely, Fra Giocondo, the Veronese; and he adds that all his auditors were of the same community.[1] Temanza, endeavouring to account for this fact, supposes that Fra Giocondo, having thrown off the Dominican habit, may have been roughly used by his superiors, and that as he was now a sexagenerian, he resolved to enter the Franciscan cloister. I will neither admit nor reject this opinion; but I must observe that if he embraced the Minorite discipline in 1508, he must necessarily have spent the greater number of his days amongst the Preaching-Friars.

Fra Giocondo's sojourn in Venice was not continuous during these two years, for Father Federici writes, that he proceeded, in 1507, to Trevigi to superintend some hydraulic works on the Piave.[2] But his duties as a good citizen soon recalled him to Venice. Sad and sorrowful were the times. Pope Julius II. was anxious to wreak his vengeance on that Republic, which disturbed his repose; and the vengeance of Julius was tremendous. Not content with leaguing all Europe against the Adriatic Queen, he fulminated heaven's thunders on her domes and minarets; and heaven seemed

[1] He says, however, (p. 69 of the Life of Fra Giocondo) that at the period of the League of Cambray, A.D., 1509, "Fra Giocondo was passing his days with his confreres, the Dominicans, in the monastery of San Niccolo at Trevigi. Temanza is excellent authority, and we may regard his words as proving beyond all doubt that Fra Giocondo was a Dominican in 1509.

[2] Federici, Memorie Trevigiane, vol. ii.

banded with earth for the ruin of Venice. Fire consumed the Republican arsenal; the citadel of Brescia was a heap of charred cinders; the archives were destroyed; the money for the payment of the troops was lost in the sea; and these calamities were followed by the defeat at Ghiradadda.[1] Nevertheless, the spirit of the Republic was untamed, and with unprecedented valour and constancy, it struggled against the wrath of heaven and earth. Wishing to protect Trevigi against the emperor Maximilian, it had recourse to Fra Giocondo; and the friar, who was as skilful in fortifications as he was in deciphering an old manuscript, or illustrating the crabbed text of Vitruvius, set out on the 9th of June, from Venice, and proceeded to Trevigi. He had scarcely entered the walls, when he arranged a new plan of defence. He spared neither hospitals nor palaces, but cleared away all of them in order to construct the fosse and esplanade. He levelled all the high towers on the walls, that they might not serve as marks for the enemy's gunners, to the inevitable destruction of the besieged. The historian Zuccato, though lamenting the ruin of the ancient city, could not refrain from lauding the beauty of this work, and Bologni extols it in Latin verses. And, verily, there arose from these ruins, such a work, as Bembo says, was no where else to be witnessed, whether as a defence or an ornament to a city. The new style of military operations, says Tipaldo, owing to the invention of that less human than diabolical instrument, required new architecture. Here imitation was of little use, and the more urgent the need, the more necessary was it to secure promptness of plan and genius. Let us imagine this friar, who had passed the greater part of his life collect-

[1] Guicciardini, Storia d' Italia, lib. viii., chap. i., ad. ann. 1509.

ing Latin inscriptions, and consulting Latin authors—let us imagine him called to defend a city against these terrible missiles, which are far more destructive than "heaven's thunder!" Strange sight to behold a *Friar* defending a city against which all Europe was leagued! The temporary defences, formed out of clay, which he erected at this period, were substituted by stonework in the following year; and, indeed, such was its excellence, that it astounded Charles V. when he visited the city. It was from the contemplation of these defences, that Pennacchio derived that great knowledge of engineering and military architecture which entitled him to the esteem of a king of England. Fra Giocondo constructed new battlements, excavated new fosses, and built extraordinary water-tanks, by means of which he was enabled to flood the country for a mile round, at a moment's notice. Wonderful power of art, that reminds us of the prodigies which love of country prompted Archimedes to perform in the land of the fabulous giants! In fact, the water-tanks were twice effectively employed to scatter the enemy, and impede his approach.[1] Hence, Fra Giocondo was the first link, in that series of military engineers that subsequently flourished in the Dominican Order, which may truly congratulate itself on having given many a valiant soldier to "native land." Having completed the defences, our Friar once more betook himself to his studies on antiquities and architecture. The

[1] Elogio, etc. p. 23. These machines were subsequently constructed of marble, with keys and pipes of bronze and steel; and Tipaldo says that they were to be seen at the beginning of the present century. Federici has published an account of all the operations about Trevigi at the period of the siege. A document, dated November 18, 1509, has the following subscription:—"For a Partido, (a military instrument) made by command, by Alvise Lancenigo and me, Fra Giovanni Giocondo." Mem. Trevig.

immediate result of them was the new edition of Vitruvius, which he dedicated to Julius II., on the 22nd of May, 1511.[1] He asserts in the dedication, that his edition of the Roman Architect should not have been inferior to any other in accuracy of annotations, or correctness of text, had he been allowed *that repose which to the studious, is more toilsome and profitable than any other sort of occupation*—"*which repose*," he adds, "*thou alone, most holy father, canst give me.*" Some have understood these words as implying dissatisfaction with his newly-adopted Order; and that he thus threw out a hint to the Pope, of his desire to return to the world. It appears, however, that he could not congratulate himself on the flexibility of Pope Julius.

If we are to credit some writers, this man, whose thirst for knowledge was insatiable, returned to Verona in 1512, in order to strengthen a pier of the new bridge over the Adige, which was threatened with ruin; others, however, date this return at a much later period. Perhaps it was about this time that he held these learned disputations (of which Vasari writes) before the Emperor Maximilian and Julius Cæsar Scaliger; but others think that these took place many years before in Germany, where it is said that Giocondo passed a considerable time in the Imperial court.[2]

In 1513, the Rialto, the emporium of Venetian commerce, was destroyed by fire; and that Republic, which in all its urgent needs, had recourse to our Friar, besought him now, though an octogenerian, for a new design, not only of the Rialto, but of the entire circumjacent region.

[1] "Marcus Vitruvius per Jucundum solito castigatior factus cum figuris et tabula, ut jam legi et intelligi potest." Venetiis, 1511.

[2] Temanza, Tipaldo. Tiraboschi Stor. della Lett. Ital. Vasari.

Fra Giocondo, therefore, presented himself to the Magistracy, and designed such a magnificent plan, that Vasari tells us "nothing by any artist could have been more magnificent, more beautiful, or better arranged." In this design he consulted not only the convenience and requirements of a place appropriated to commerce; but he, likewise, took care that it should be an ornament to the city, and in every way fitted for the recreation of the people. Vasari gives us an ample description of it, and pondering it, we cannot but admire the noble imagination, and the exquisite taste of this distinguished architect. Nevertheless, we must lament the exigencies of the times which deprived the city of this stupendous ornamentation. Two causes prevented Giocondo's design from being realised. The first was its own magnificence; for the Republic, exhausted by the protracted war in which it was engaged against the League of Cambray, could not supply the necessary sums. The second was the competition of another architect, named Scarpagnino, who, although far inferior to Giocondo, having secured the patronage of a Venetian noble, and having furnished a less expensive design, saw it carried into effect, to the great grief of all the intelligent in such matters, and to the great mortification of Giocondo, who regarded himself as set aside for a very undistinguished artist. Remembering that he saw Aleardi preferred to him, on the two occasions that the Republic solicited his advice touching the lagoons and the Rialto, he was seized with indignation, shook the dust from off his sandals at the doors of the proud patricians, and set out for Rome. It was in Rome that Giocondo commenced his antiquarian and architectural studies—it was there that his young soul received its earliest notions of Religion, History, and Art, and at this advanced period of his life, must not his

generous and noble heart have been filled with that enthusiasm which the sight of the Holy City awakens in the bosom of every Catholic—nay, and of every artist? There, he stood once more amid the glorious memorials of the past, weighed down by years, no doubt, but with a soul that was still vigorous. Having filled Europe with his fame, he now counted on closing his days in the society of Angelo, Raffaello, and of that grand phalanx of intellect, which was then shedding lustre on Rome. Leo X., the idol of artists, had just then ascended the Pontifical throne, and the learned in all the arts and sciences had come to do homage to their tiarad Macænas. Julius Cæsar Scaliger mentions Fra Giocondo's journey to Rome in the following terms:—"He then, as I have heard, set out for Venice, and subsequently for Rome, to Pope Leo. I know not whether this was for his benefit or not; but I would deem it miraculous if he led a better life there than elsewhere, for he was an exemplar of sanctity and of universal erudition."[1] Having reached Rome, perhaps in March, 1514, he was present at Bramante's death.[2] The Pontiff was overwhelmed with sorrow for the loss of such an illustrious architect, and although Bramante had told him, with his latest breath, that Raffaello alone was worthy to succeed him,[3] in superintending the building of S. Peter's, he began to think that the Urbinese was so much occupied with his paintings, and so little accustomed to conducting buildings of such magnitude, that he must needs be assisted by some architect of celebrity. Having heard of Fra Giocondo's arrival in

[1] This authority must disabuse those who hold that Fra Giocondo went to Venice after having spent some time at the building of S. Peter's.

[2] Bramante died on the morning of the eleventh of March, 1514.

[3] Pungileoni, Elogio di Raffaello, p. 160.

Rome, he invited him to join Raffaello at this stupendous undertaking; and, he added to the two, Giuliano da San Gallo, the Florentine.[1] Of this fact, so highly creditable to the name of Fra Giocondo, we have, along with Vasari's authority, a precious record, which has been published by Father Pungileoni.[2] This is a letter, addressed by Raffaello to his uncle, Simone di Battista di Ciarle da Urbino, dated July 1, 1514. About the middle of the letter he expresses himself thus:—"As to staying in Rome, I may as well tell you, that I cannot stay anywhere else, so devoted am I to the building of S. Peter's; and I now occupy the place of Bramante. What place is there in the world which is superior to Rome, or what undertaking is there greater than that of S. Peter's? This is the greatest building that has ever been seen, and it must cost more than a million in gold. You must know that the Pope has determined to expend, on this building, sixty thousand ducats annually: indeed, he does not think of anything else. The Pope has given me, as my companion, a most learned friar: he is very old, and has passed his eightieth year. The Pope, knowing that he cannot live long, appointed him to be my colleague, for he is a man of great reputation, and

[1] Vasari, in his Life of Giuliano da San Gallo, would make us doubt whether this architect had any part in the building of St. Peter's, as he writes, "being worn down by old age and a malady that tormented him, he obtained leave from the Pope, and returned to Florence; and that charge (the building of S. Peter's) was entrusted to the graceful Raffaello da Urbino." Nevertheless, Pungileoni proves that Giuliano worked at the building, from Jan. 1, 1514 (during Bramante's life) till 1518; and that he was paid fifteen ducats per month. Milizia has fallen into an error when stating that Antonio da San Gallo, Giuliano's brother, was elected to that office; as Antonio did nothing more than execute the model of S. Peter's, after Bramante's design. This model is preserved in the Vatican.—V. Taia's Descriz. del. Vat.

[2] Pungileoni, Elogio di Raf.

exceedingly wise. I will learn of him any fine secret that he may possess regarding architecture, and I hope thus to become perfect in this art. His name is Fra Giocondo, and the Pope sends for us every day, and discourses a while with us about this building."[1] This letter clearly proves, that if Fra Giocondo was more than eighty years of age in 1514, he must have been born before 1434. It proves, moreover, that he imparted instruction to Raffaello during the building of the great Basilica. An expression, which has fallen from Scaliger, would allow us to presume, that Raffaello and Giuliano da San Gallo, in following out Bramante's design, found themselves embarrassed, without knowing how to proceed, till the Pope sent for Fra Giocondo, who resolved all doubts, and cleared away all difficulties. "He, alone, (Giocondo) understood all Bramante's designs and specifications."[2] As Vasari tells us what was achieved by this triumvirate of architects, in the building of S. Peter's, let us hear him:—"Certain parts of the edifice were giving evidence of weakness and decay, from having been hastily executed, as well as from other causes, of which mention has already been made in another place. By the advice of Fra Giocondo, Raffaello, and Giuliano, therefore, the foundations were, in a great measure, renewed, in which process, persons who were present thereat, and are still living, declare that they pursued the methods hereafter described. They caused numerous cavities, of large size, to be dug beneath the foundations, at due distance from each other, and in the manner of wells, but of a square form; these they filled with masonry, and between every two of these piers, for so the excavations thus filled may be called, they threw very

[1] Pungileoni, Elogio di Raf.

[2] Exercitat, apud Echard.

strong arches, which, crossing the ground beneath, eventually supplied a new foundation, on which the whole fabric was thus placed without having suffered injury or disturbance, while the building was secured from all danger of further deterioration."[1] A manuscript formerly belonging to Cardinal Bibbiena, was discovered in the Chigi Library, at Rome, by Father Pungileoni, and this valuable document tells us what was the amount of the stipend given to the three architects during the building of S. Peter's. Under date, March 27, 1518, we there find the following entry:—"Fra Giocondo, the Veronese, receives 25 ducats per month." Up to the present, no one knew how long Fra Giocondo was employed at the building, but this manuscript clearly proves, that he was engaged at the works for fully four years.[2]

During the progress of this vast undertaking, which of itself was quite sufficient to absorb all his thoughts, Giocondo never neglected his beloved study of the Latin classics. In 1517 he published a new edition of Cæsar's Commentaries, with valuable additions and corrections; and he also gave a design of the wonderful bridge which the great general threw across the Rhone, and of which he has left us a description in his Commentaries. Hitherto very few could form an exact notion of this marvellous piece of Roman pontooning.[3] He dedicated this edition to Giuliano de' Medici, and he therein clearly stated that he was rapidly approaching his earthly bourne. —"I am now," quoth he, "at that period of life which

[1] See Giocondo's Life, translated by Mrs. Foster.

[2] Pungileoni, loc. cit., p. 162, tells us that Giocondo and Raffaello were paid 300 ducats per annum, whilst Giuliano da San Gallo received only 180.

[3] Some state that this edition of Julius Cæsar was published in 1513; but Tiraboschi and Echard maintain that it saw the light in Venice in 1517.

will not allow me to promise you much more." In fact, he was then almost in his ninetieth year; but even this venerable age did not prevent him from revisiting his beloved Verona, if we may credit Bottari and Tiraboschi. We have already asserted, on Vasari's authority, that Fra Giocondo was employed to strengthen a pier of the bridge which the Veronese call Ponte Novo (the new bridge). Tipaldo,[1] following other historians, says that he was engaged at this work in 1512; and he, it would appear, asserts this on the authority of Vasari, who states that said pier was strengthened during the sojourn of the Emperor Maximilian in Verona. Bottari, however, in his annotations to this biographer, labours to prove that this occurrence took place A. D. 1521. Tiraboschi, in the continuation of Pietro Zagata's Chronicle of Verona, published by Biancolini, towards the close of 1520, adds, "and at this period was constructed the bridge called DELLA PREDA, which heretofore was of wood."[2] We will here remark, that the operation suggested by Giocondo, of bracing the pier, by means of wooden strengtheners, which some assert was carried into effect, in 1512, is nowise at variance with Zagata's narrative; and, indeed, many wooden bridges had stone piers, and the piers of the Carraja, at Florence, were constructed of stone before 1330, though the remainder was formed of wood. Fra Giocondo, therefore, may have saved the pier from the destruction with which it was threatened in 1512, and the rest of the bridge may have been built of stone in 1520.[3]

[1] Elogio, p. 23. [2] Tiraboschi, Lett. Ital.

[3] Masselli, in a note to Vasari's Life of Giocondo, makes the following statement, which is irreconcilable with Zagata's:—"Said bridge was of Roman construction, but we have now only two arches of the ancient times the others having been destroyed by the floods of the Adige, one of which

Here end our notices of the life and works of Fra Giocondo. We have vainly sought to ascertain when or where he died. Some affirm that he terminated his earthly career in Germany, at the Court of the Emperor Maximilian; but we cannot bring ourselves to believe, that the nonagenerian Friar would have left "Almighty Rome," and the Court of Leo X., to find a grave in distant Germany.

There are some geniuses, whose destiny seems to be unrest—souls that are constantly dreaming of an ideal perfection, which is far beyond the condition of our miserable nature. People of this character are continually impelled to vary their studies, occupations, professions, nay, and even their locality, ever and always yearning for the *better* that eludes them, and of which years cannot disenchant them. In a word, there is no rest for the soles of their feet. Such, indeed, was the character of our Fra Giocondo. Although educated in the Dominican Order, which has, at all times, allowed ample time for studies congenial to the tastes of its members, as well as ample exercise for the external faculties, it does not appear to have harmonised with the notions of this ardent and laborious spirit. It may be, that he shrank from the silence and seclusion of the cloister, or that *interior life* had no charm for him. Be that as it may, we easily collect from his dedication to Julius II., that he was given to rambling, to the alternation of pursuits, and, in a word, to that state of restlessness which can never be satisfied. Withal, there are few amongst the learned who have rendered more services to the public than did this Friar of Verona. To him we are

occurred in 1512, and gave room for the exercise of Fra Giocondo's genius, as he executed the work in 1520.

indebted for a new and complete edition of the Second Pliny's Letters, nay, and of the works of Cæsar, Cato, Vitruvius, Frontinus, Aurelius Victor, and Julius Obsequen's De Prodigiis.[1] He produced the first and most copious collection of Latin inscriptions that had ever been published anterior to his times; and, as for his architectural works, what we have written must suffice. Pontiffs and Princes esteemed him; he was loved by J. Cæsar Scaliger, Sannazzaro, Aldo Manuzio, Domizio Calderino, Matteo Bosso, and by the whole Roman Academy. Budeo and Paolo Emilio celebrated his praises in France; in a word, he was honoured by all the celebrities of his age. Vasari and Scaliger encomiate the exemplarity of his life. What greater glory could crown the name of Fra Giocondo?

These facts, however feebly narrated, and howsoever unadorned our style may be, will, we would fain hope, make amends for many defects, and give our readers a distinct notion of the virtues and splendid genius of this illustrious philologist and architect, of whom Italy is justly proud.

CHAPTER X.

Fra Marco Pensaben and Fra Marco Maraveja, Venetian Painters—Examination and Confutation of Federici's opinion regarding the first of these Artists.

Over the grand altar of that severe and majestic temple which the Dominican architects erected at Trevigi, in honour of the holy Pontiff Nicholas, there is a splendid painting, fully twenty feet high, by twelve wide. In

[1] Echard.

imitation of the Paolesque design, the artist has there painted a magnificent cupola, resting on arches and columns, and so admirable is the management of the perspective and chiaroscuro, that one may almost fancy it to be, not an illusion, but a true work of elegant architecture. Above the cupola, on the right and left, in two medallions, are the Evangelists, Mark and John. In the centre of the temple, seated on a lofty throne, is the Virgin, with her divine Son in her arms; and at her feet, (as in Fra Bartolommeo's compositions,) there is a little Angel playing a lute. Then come the worshippers of the Son and Mother; on the right are S. Dominic, S. Nicholas, and the Blessed Benedict XI.; and on the left we beheld S. Thomas of Aquino, S. Jerom, and S. Liberale.

For fully two centuries no one could ascertain who was the author of this glorious work; but the richness of the composition, the beauty of the colouring, and the exquisite expression of the attitudes and countenances, together with the admirable handling of the perspective, left no doubt that it was the creation of some great painter of the Venetian school, which never lacked illustrious masters. Some fancied it the work of the Bellini school, some attributed it to Tiziano, and others to Giorgione di Castelfranco; nay, there were some who fancied they recognised in it the hand and style of that Bastiano del Piombo, whom Michelangiolo invoked to eclipse his rival Raffaello, and his whole school. At length Father Federici discovered in the archives of the convents of S. John and Paul, in Venice, and of S. Nicholas in Trevigi, most authentic documents which proved that this painting was executed by two Venetian artists of S. Dominic's Order, who, up to the time of the publication of his Trevigian Memoirs, *i. e.*, till 1803 were buried in profound oblivion. These are the Father

Marco Pensaben, and Marco Maraveja, both priests of the convent of S. John and Paul in Venice. The notices concerning the first are copious; but we cannot say as much concerning the second, of whom there is only passing mention in the ancient records.

Fra Marco Pensaben was born in Venice, A. D. 1486. Of his parents, and of his boyhood, we know nothing. Similar darkness overclouds the infancy of his compatriots and confreres, Fra Francesco Colonna and Fra Giocondo. The oldest and best authenticated memoir which we have of Pensaben, is dated 1510, and it informs us, that he was then a priest in the convent of SS. John and Paul, in his own country. This document is a note addressed to the Provincial, on the 20th of May of the same year, and it sets forth, that Fra Marco was then twenty-four years of age, and that he was one of the last of those who had taken the Dominican habit in that convent.[1] Subsequently we find mention of him in the Capitular Acts of the years, 1514, 1515, 1516, and in the first of these, under date March 7, he is called sub-prior; and that of 1524, states that he had been elected head Sacristan.[2] In the journal of the church and convent of S. Nicholas (Trevigi), which was continued from 1510 to 1529, we find entries of all the sums expended for the painting of the great altar-piece of that church; and the first of them is dated March 7, 1520. On the 13th of April, it appears that a certain Victor Belliniano came to Trevigi, deputed by Fra Marco Pensaben, to sign a contract with the religious of that convent; and that he received by way of an instalment, forty-nine lire and twelve soldi. On the 24th of the same month, Pensaben came to Trevigi; and we find under date, May 4, the

[1] Federici, Mem. Trevig., vol. i. [2] Loc. cit.

entries of various sums expended on him as he was then sick. The only mention we have of Maraveja, is dated August 11th, of the same month; and we there find that he had received six lire, on account of said painting. The last entry relating to Fra Marco Pensaben, bears date Jan. 13, 1521.[1]

This Fra Marco Pensaben, who certainly was not another Fra Angelico, but rather resembled that bizarre genius, Fra F. Colonna, left the picture half finished and then disappeared from Trevigi. For a long time there were no tidings of him, though the community sought the fugitive in Padua, Monsalice, Legnago, and elsewhere.[2] Despairing of ever again setting their eyes on this artist, the Fathers of S. Nicholas, whether it was that they had not confidence in Maraveja, or that he, too, had disappeared, determined to have the painting finished; and they, therefore, invited Gian Girolamo, and a companion of his, who were Venetian painters, to complete the work, as appears by a contract signed on the 8th of September, 1521. Two years more passed by without any tidings of Pensaben. In 1524 we find him in Venice, still wearing the Dominican habit; but in 1530, the authentic books of the Order enumerate him amongst the religious, who had either cast off their habit or died. Of Maraveja there is no further mention.

These fragmentary notices suggest the following inquiry:—How could a painter of such genius—a painter who executed a work so perfect that it was attributed to Tiziano, Giorgione, and Sebastiano del Piombo—have

[1] Loc. cit.

[2] In this journal, under date July 16, 1521, we read, "On the 16th a sum of money was given to Fra Alvise, who was charged to go to Padua, Monselice, etc. in search of Fra Marco Pensaben, and induce him to come back and finish the altar-piece in Trevigi.

been unknown to his contemporaries? Or are we to suppose that he left no other specimen of his powers than the design of the Trevigian picture, of which he coloured only one half? Federici, not being able to solve this difficulty, had recourse to a paradox, which is as ingenious as it is distant from the truth. He opines, nay, he holds as indubitable, that Fra Marco Pensaben was no other than that most distinguished painter, Sebastiano Luciani, commonly called del Piombo. The following are his reasons for this strange conclusion:—He first quotes the authority of some writers on Venetian art, who alluded to the Trevigian picture, making special mention of Ambrogio Rigamonti, and Pietro Brandolese, who asserted that said picture was painted by Sebastiano del Piombo; and that Sebastiano Luciani was a Dominican, who flourished about 1520. But no writer should seek to build truth on such misconceptions. Lomazzo fell into a similar error, when he called Fra Bartolommeo an Augustinian; but up to the present, nobody has cared to support this lumbering lie.[1]

As to Rigamonti's authority, Federici discourses thus:[2] "If that Fra Marco Pensaben was a man of such merit, how comes it that this cognomen is never mentioned by any one of that period; or, how is it that the Dominicans themselves, are ignorant of him? Whenever any notice is made of Fra Marco Pensaben, he is merely spoken of as a young priest, who was once elected Sub-prior and Sacristan. Are we to imagine that Fra Marco was concealed in a monastery of Cenobites, so that no one knew him? But, Fra Marco was the intimate friend of Belliniano, and his worth was known to the Prior of the Trevigian Dominicans, who employed him to execute

[1] Trattato della Pittura, lib. vi.

[2] Loc. cit., p. 121.

an extraordinary work, on which they spared no outlay. And, if Fra Marco was known, what other work of his in Venice or Trevigi have you to prove it? Again, where has any one heard or read, in Pictorial History, of such a master as Fra Marco Pensaben? . . . We must, therefore, conclude that he painted under another name and cognomen, and that he was known as Pensaben, only whilst he was executing the far-famed altar-piece of Trevigi. But all the characteristics of that work, are peculiar to the genius and pencil of Fra Bastian del Piombo. Let us see if Fra Marco Pensaben, the Dominican, was also Bastian di Venezia, Bastian Luciani, and finally Fra Bastian del Piombo." . . . "That Fra Marco Pensaben was identical with Bastian da Venezia, is evident from the Chronology, *i. e.*, the series of the years of the life of Fra Bastian del Piombo—nay, this is still more evidently established by his whimsical and extravagant genius; by his slowness and volubility, for which he has been taken to task by Vasari and Tolomei—need we say, that the painting in Trevigi is an evidence of these two defects?—need you more to establish this identity?—if so, look to the style of his painting, which is in every respect similar to that which characterises the works executed by Bastiano in Venice, Rome, Viterbo, Perugia, and Naples." At page 124, Federici conjectures that after Sebastiano Luciani had competed with Raffaello in Rome, during the early period of the Pontificate of Julius the Second, he was so chagrined by his signal defeat, that he abandoned Rome, and proceeded to Venice, where he concealed himself and his shame in the Dominican convent, which at that period counted two kinsmen of his amongst its brotherhood: these were Marc Antonio, and Giulio Luciani. "Here," quoth Federici, "having taken the name o-

Marco, instead of Sebastiano, and the cognomen of Pensaben, in lieu of Luciani, he was persuaded by his kinsmen to take the Dominican habit." He then goes on to say that "he was invited (whilst still a Dominican, *i. e.*, in 1520,) to come to Trevigi, to paint the grand altar-piece, and that his relative, Giulio Luciani, was then actually in that convent, and that when he heard of Raffaello's death, which occurred on the Good-Friday[1] of that same year, Sebastiano Luciani cast off his habit, and the assumed name of Pensaben, and set out for Rome, to betake himself once more to painting. Here, however, he remained only a short time, for on the accession of Pope Adrian VI., (he succeeded Leo X.,) who cared very little for the Fine Arts, our painter thought it wiser to take the cowl once more; and it is for this reason that the Registry of the Venetian convent mentions him as Marco Pensaben, in 1524. These extraordinary transformations were not completed yet; for when Clement VII. ascended the throne, the artists began to hope for better things, and Sebastiano Luciani, having once more uncowled himself, returned to Rome, where he associated himself with Michelangiolo, and laboured with that Sovereign Master, to outshine Raffaello's scholars, for which he received the office of a *Monk of the Lead*. I will not deny that it was quite usual for the Friars to resume and cast off their habits on the most frivolous pretexts; but, I will not admit that these changes of name, habit, and condition should be looked upon as facts, supported by evidence. It is not the part of a prudent man to give credence to every conjecture.

[1] It may not be out of place to remark, that Raffaello died on Good Friday, 1520; and that Fra Marco Pensaben did not disappear from Trevigi till early in the July of 1521, *i.e.* a year and a half after Sanzio's demise.

The last argument that Federici advances to sustain his assumption, is not more convincing than the first. "Giovanni da Udine," quoth he, "Bramante Vani, and Guglielmo della Porta, were for some time clerks of *the Lead*, but they never styled themselves *Brothers*, (Frati,) as Sebastiano Luciani always signed himself in his letters; hence, we must believe that he belonged to a religious institute; and as his method of colouring resembles that of Marco Pensaben, the Dominican, it is evident that it was the same painter, under two different names." Federici, therefore, concludes that until we prove by new documents, that Sebastiano Luciani painted as a layman, from 1510, to 1524, in Rome, Venice, and elsewhere, we must fail to convince him that Fra Marco Pensaben and Sebastiano Luciani are two distinct persons.[1]

These, if I mistake not, are the principal arguments—and they are sufficiently prolix—on which Federici relies. But, though it might be flattering to our amour propre to claim an artist of Luciani's merit for the Order to which we belong, truth must be preferred to every selfish interest. We have already endeavoured to prove that Fra Giocondo was for some time a Dominican, and we will now show that Sebastiano never was such, and that he was simply a *Brother of the Lead*, or as some would say, of *the Signet*.

Federici's arguments may be reduced to three:—1st. The resemblance of the paintings, and of the capricious genius of the two artists. 2nd. The consonance of the chronology. 3rd. The designation of Friar (Frate) or brother bestowed on Sebastiano Luciani. As to the first, if a resemblance of style or genius should be taken, as

[1] Memorie Trevigiane.

an argument to make two artists out of one, too many names must necessarily disappear from the pictorial alphabet, nay, and from the biographies and histories of Art; and then, perhaps, we might behold the Genoese Cappucine metamorphosed into Fra Marco Pensaben, as they were both very whimsical friars, and excellent colourists. This principle, which would subvert all history, logically speaking, proves nothing; for nature, which is most varied in all her productions, very often effects similar results, by the most opposite agencies. As to the second argument, it has been answered by Lanzi and Pungileoni, who prove, that at the very time when Fra Marco Pensaben dwelt in Venice, and subsequently in Trevigi, Sebastiano Luciani was actually in Rome. Cardinal Giulio de' Medici had charged Raffaello to paint the Transfiguration, and he had scarcely completed it when he died, on the Good Friday of 1520. Now, at this precise period, as though he meant to compete with Raffaello, (see Vasari,) Sebastiano Luciani produced the Resurrection of Lazarus, for the same Cardinal, which, after it had been exhibited along with the Transfiguration, was removed to France.[1] We may add, also, that Luciani painted the martyrdom of S. Agatha for the Cardinal of Arragon, which picture, in Vasari's time, was in the possession of the Duke of Urbino. Having been removed to Florence, it was thence carried off to France. This work is signed "*Sebastianus Venetus*, A.D. 1520." Hence, Fra Marco cannot be confounded with Sebastiano, nor can the Trevigian altar-piece be attributed to the latter. It is very easy to answer the objection founded on the designation "brother" (Frate) which was given to

[1] Pungileoni, Elogio Stor. di Raffaello. Lanzi's Hist. of Painting, Venetian School. 1st Epoch.

Luciani, when he obtained the office of the *signet*. It was usually conferred, according to Serafino Razzi, on the lay-monks of the Cistercian Order, and every secular who obtained the appointment took the habit and nomenclature of this Institute. For example, we have seen how Fra Mariano Fetti abandoned the Dominican habit, and took that of S. Bernard, as soon as he was promoted to be a "*Brother of the Lead*." But such remarks ought not to have been necessary for such a man as Federici, who must have known that many other artists, on their elevation to this office, took the name of *Brother*. Could he not have found in Vasari that Guglielmo della Porta, the Milanese Sculptor, and disciple of Angelo, after he had received this honour, was always addressed as Frate Guglielmo? He should have read the life of Benvenuto Cellini, if he needed further proof.[1]

Let us now answer his last argument—namely, that the only work produced by an artist so eminent as Fra Marco Pensaben, was the Trevigian altar-piece. In fact, we can point to many painters who did not produce more than one or two paintings; and a singular instance of this may be found in the person of our Fra Carnovale, who, for a long time, was thought to have executed no picture, save that which is now in the Imperial Gallery of the Brera, at Milan; but as for Pensaben, we can show that he did paint another picture. In the gallery of Count Lochis, of Bergamo, there is a small painting, in admirable preservation, concerning the originality of which there can be no doubt, as the artist signed it with

[1] Benvenuto's Life, written by himself, chap. xi. "Finding that the Pope has never remembered to give me anything, and seeing that there was a vacancy for *a brother of the Lead*, I one night asked him for it."

his name. This picture represents the B. V. M., with her Son in her arms. At her side is a holy bishop, (a Dominican Saint,) and before her is a Friar of the same Order, who has his hands joined devoutly in the attitude of prayer. Some think that this is the portrait of the painter. The B. V. in attestation of her patronage, lays her hand on the head of the suppliant, and the Infant blesses him. The ground of the picture is a beautiful landscape, with a convent and church, which, perhaps, were designed to represent the sanctuary and domicile of the Artist. In its upper part we read on a scroll:—"Fra Marcus Venetus Pictor." The colouring is of the Bellini style, and it is one of the rarest and most beautiful works of the old Venetian school.

Federici himself mentions two portraits by Pensaben, as actually existing in the convent of San Nicolo, at Trevigi. One of them is the likeness of Fra Alberto Arpo, founder of the Trevigian convent, and the other is that of Fra Leonardo Ermizio, founder of the convent of Cividale.[1] They form part of the gallery of Illustrious Dominicans, chiefly executed by the painter Bernardino Castello, in continuation of that, which Tommaso da Modena frescoed in the same convent in the fourteenth century. This proves that Fra Marco Pensaben did more than paint the Trevigian altar-piece. Though time and man may have destroyed many works by this religious, they have left us enough to establish his claim to a distinguished place amongst the most perfect disciples of the Venetian school.

[1] Memorie Trevigiane, vol. 2, p. 227.

CHAPTER XI.

Fra Guglielmo Marcillat, a celebrated painter on glass, Architect and Painter —His Works in Rome, in Cortona, in Arezzo, and in Perugia.

I WAS for a long time in doubt where I ought to write the life of Fra Guglielmo di Marcillat; or follow the example of Malvasia, in the Felsina Pittrice,[1] and give the memoir that Vasari has written, simply adding such notices as I have been able to collect concerning this distinguished artist. No one, surely, can flatter himself with the idea of being able to excel Vasari in elegance of style; and most indubitably no other biographer was better fitted to treat of Marcillat than was Vasari, who contemporaneously with Benedetto Spadari, studied the art of painting under the subject of this memoir. Vasari's narrative, therefore, may be regarded as a very elegant literary performance, as well as an affectionate tribute of his gratitude. I have, therefore, resolved to cull the chiefest portions of what is to follow from the grand historian of our Arts; and to interpose from time to time between the reader and the biographer, acting the part of a prompter whenever the memory of the latter becomes defective. I shall study, however, to avoid all prolix, and useless digressions.

Marcillat's birth-place was for a long time unknown. Vasari, who at one time calls it Marcilla, and at another Marzilla, caused many to conclude that he was born in

[1] Such is the title of Malvasia's Lives of the Bolognese Painters.

Marseilles. Father della Valle asserts that he was a native of that city, and that he has discovered authentic documents to prove it.[1] It is now, however, generally admitted that the Marcilla and Marzilla of Vasari was a corruption of Marcillat, which, in all probability, was Fra Guglielmo's cognomen.

Doctor Gaye (a most accurate writer) discovered a document in the Archives of the episcopate of Arezzo, which tells us where he first saw the light; it styles him Messer Guillelmo de Piero, a Frenchman, Prior of S. Tibaldo, of S. Michele, in the diocese of Verdun. Moreover, our artist subscribes himself, "I Guillelmo, son of Piero Marcillat.[2] Hence, we conclude that Marcillat was the cognomen of the family; Piero, the name of his father; S. Tibaldo, the priory which he obtained in Tuscany; and S. Michele, in the diocese of Verdun, the place where he drew his first breath. Let us observe that it is necessary to place a comma after the words *Prior of S. Tibaldo*, lest any one might be led to suppose that his priory was in France, than which nothing is farther from the truth. According to Vasari, he was born in 1475. Of his early years, and of his studies, in his own country, we have no account; and all that we have been able to ascertain is that he applied himself, when very young, to glass-painting, which, at that period, was lovingly cultivated in France. From the remotest times, and particularly owing to the zeal of Abbot Suger,[3] during the reign of Charles the Bald, and

[1] Notes to Vasari in the Milanese and Sienese editions. A similar error occurs in the work entitled, "Geografia Politica dell' Italia," one vol. p. 430. Biblioteca dell' Italiano, 1845.

[2] Carteggio Inedito di Artisti, vol. 2, appen. p. 449, note.

[3] Abbot Suger built the celebrated Abbey of Saint Denis which was consecrated in 1140.

Louis le Gros, this art was cherished in that country; till it at last attained to wonderful perfection in the days of Pinaigrier, Jean Cousin, Bernard Palissy, and Angrand.[1] But Marcillat was destined to raise it to that degree of excellence which is unparalleled in any place, or former period. The motive that induced this French artist to enter the cloister, is told us by his biographer, thus:— "Yielding to the importunities of his kinsmen, he was present when an enemy of theirs was slain, and he was thus forced to take the habit of a Dominican in his own country, in order to escape the court and justice.[2] And although, (adds the biographer,) he remained in Religion, he never abandoned the study of art; but, on the contrary, by continuing it, arrived at great perfection." From this, we conclude, that the religious gave him ample scope and every facility to cultivate glass-painting; and that he must have spent a considerable time in the cloister, in order to arrive at that elegance for which he is famed. In the first volume of these Memoirs we have shown that many of his confreres practised glass-painting in Italy; and we have spoken at length of Fra Bartolommeo di Pietro, who painted the great window of the choir of San Domenico in Perugia, as well as of the Blessed James of Ulm, and his various and excellent disciples in this art. But Fra Guglielmo di Marcillat outshone them all.

Whilst Marcillat was living in his convent, wholly devoted to religion, he formed an intimacy with a certain Claude, a very able artist; and, probably it was this man

[1] Bourassè, Archeologie Chretienne, p. 251.

[2] V. Vasari. We may here remind the reader that the eccentric Benvenuto Cellini took refuge in S. Maria Novella, at Florence, and escaped thence from his pursuers, (with whom he had been engaged in a brawl,) disguised as a Dominican Friar.

who initiated him in the art of glass-painting. The precepts and works of this Claude helped to perfect Marcillat in this most difficult art, which has to contend against the difficulties of the very fragile material, nay, and of the fire in which the glass must be prepared. "Meanwhile," quoth Vasari, "Pope Julius II. had commissioned the architect, Bramante, to cause numerous windows in painted-glass to be prepared for his palace, when it chanced that the latter, making inquiry for the most distinguished among those employed in that branch of art, received intelligence respecting certain masters who were then executing admirable works of the kind in France, and had the opportunity of examining a specimen by means of the French ambassador, who was then at the court of his Holiness; this was a window enclosed within a frame, which the ambassador had in his study, and whereon was a figure painted with various colours on white glass, which had afterwards been submitted to the action of fire. Letters were thereupon written to France, by order of Bramante, requesting those masters to proceed to Rome, and offering them liberal appointments. Claude, therefore, a Frenchman, and the chief of that vocation, having received this intelligence, and knowing the excellence of Guglielmo, easily induced him by money and fair promises, to leave his brethren of the cloister; nor was it difficult, indeed, to separate him from those monks, seeing that the discourtesies which he had experienced at their hands, and the envious jeers which are constantly in action among them, had rendered him more desirous to depart than Master Claude was to remove him thence."[1] We must here interrupt Vasari, in order to make a reflection, which is suggested by the love we

[1] Vasari's Lives, v. Bohn's edition.

cherish for our Institute. We have already stated what caused Marcillat to enrol himself amongst the Dominicans; it was not surely a vocation from heaven, such as would have sustained him in the *observance of rigid discipline*, nor *an aspiration for an immortal palm*, but rather the fear of human justice which pursued the author, whosoever he may have been, of that red atrocity. Neither do I know whether *money and fair promises* should be regarded as an honourable motive for flying from the cloister: the encomium, therefore, if Vasari meant it as such, is certainly very equivocal. Supposing it to be true, we must stigmatise Marcillat as venal and mercenary, and charge him with attaching more importance to the promises of lucre than to *these solemn oaths which he had sworn at the foot of the altar*. Vasari, however, as though he had forgotten all that he previously wrote, elsewhere remarks:—"*Remorse of conscience afflicted him for having left the brethren. . . . . For he felt that he was under many obligations to the religious.*" Assuredly he was indebted to them, if not for his life, at least for his liberty, which was equally dear and precious. No one, however, will wonder at Vasari's acerbity, if we bear in mind that this writer is never done snarling at the Friars, from whom he received very large sums, and who, very improvidently, gave him many works to execute. Whosoever desires to learn how cruelly this Aretine lacerated the lives and works of the most splendid and praiseworthy artists of his age, has only to read his memoirs of Pietro Perugino, Pinturicchio, and Francesco Francia.

Master Claude and Fra Guglielmo having settled in Rome, began to paint many windows for the Pontifical palace, which no longer exist. Two, however, executed by them, still remain in the church of Santa Maria del

Popolo, that is to say, in the chapel behind the Madonna;[1] in one of which, they painted six legends of the life of the Redeemer; and in the other, six of the life of the Virgin, which were highly extolled. Meanwhile, Master Claude died, (according to Vasari, of repletion,) and all the designs and implements came into the possession of his companion, who now began to work on his own account in Rome, both for the government and private individuals; and having painted some windows for the church belonging to the Germans,[2] Cardinal Silvio Passerini was so pleased with them, that he brought the painter to Cortona. But as Marcillat was not less distinguished as a glass-painter, than as an able designer and excellent frescoist, the first work which he produced for said Cardinal, was the decoration of the façade of his house, which looks out on the piazza. This he painted in chiaroscuro, representing thereon Croton and the first founders of that city. He afterwards painted two windows in the principal chapel of the Pieve of Cortona, in which he represented the Nativity of our Lord, and the Adoration of the Magi. I know not how or when these two exquisite histories passed into the choir of the cathedral; but here they remained only for a brief space, as they were purchased a few years ago, by Ridolfini Corazzi, who preserves them with the most profound veneration. As this gentleman kindly afforded me every facility for inspecting them, I deem it necessary to describe their subject. In the first of these windows is the Virgin adoring the Divine Infant; two angels kneeling and holding lighted tapers, are at either side of the Child; whilst S. Joseph, somewhat removed from the group,

[1] This is one of the Madonna's, popularly attributed to S. Luke.

[2] S. Maria dell' Anima.

contemplates this devout and affecting scene. At foot of the composition the painter wrote: "Quem genuit adoravit."[1]

The Adoration of the Magi is conceived thus:—The Virgin is seated, whilst the Infant, standing erect on His Mother's knees, blesses the prostrate Magi who adore Him: behind them is a numerous train of footmen and horses. All these figures are life size. The design is correct and grand; the expression of the heads of all the figures is very beautiful, but that of the Virgin is somewhat ignoble; the nude of the Child is well designed; and the embroideries, and other ornaments, are wonderfully exquisite. These two windows are true pictures of excellent composition. What I deem most praiseworthy, is the finish of the whole work; for the outlines of the nude are designed with the greatest precision, contrary to the usage of the Quattrocentisti, whose designs in glass-paintings were very feeble. The management of the tints, and the freshness and transparency of the colouring, are here far more excellent than in any other work of the sort, no matter at what period it may have been executed.

Count Tommaso Passerini has preserved the painted glass of two small windows, and has encased it in four frames, each of which is two and-a-half palms high. Each of these has a symbolical figure of Prudence, Fortitude, Temperance, and Justice: these are represented in the style which Raffaello subsequently followed in the Loggie of the Vatican. We will not attempt to describe the beauty of these four figures, which are correctly designed, and exquisitely coloured; but, alas! they are now so much injured, that little of them

[1] "Him whom she bare she adored."

remains. I think that these are the identical windows which Vasari says were painted by Marcillat, for Cardinal Passerini.[1] But let us follow our biographer:—"At the time when, as we have said, Guglielmo was dwelling in Cortona, Fabiano di Stagio Sassoli of Arezzo, departed this life, in that city. This artist had been an excellent master in the painting of large windows, for which reason, the superintendent of works, for the Episcopal Church, had given a commission to Stagio, son of the above-named Fabiano, and to the painter Domenico Pecori, to prepare three windows for that building; they are in the principal chapel, and are each twenty braccia in height. But when these works were completed, and the windows fixed in their places, they did not entirely satisfy the people of Arezzo, although they were, in fact, tolerably well done—nay, are rather praiseworthy than not. Now, it chanced at this time, that Messer Lodovico Bellichini, an eminent physician, and then governing the city of Arezzo, was called on to repair to Cortona, there to attend the mother of the above-named Cardinal; he then became well acquainted with Guglielmo, with whom, when he had time, he always conversed very gladly; Guglielmo, too, on his part, who was then called the Prior, from having, just about that time, received the benefice of a Priory, conceived a cordial friendship for that physician. The latter, therefore, one day asked him if he would be willing to proceed to Arezzo, for the purpose of painting certain windows in that city, provided the consent of the Cardinal could be obtained; when, having received his

1 "When Guglielmo came to Rome he had not practised drawing *much*; but knowing his deficiency in this particular, he applied himself to the study of it, and he soon gave marvellous proofs of his proficiency, as may be seen in the windows which he painted for the Cardinal in Cortona."—Vasari.

promise to that effect, Messer Lodovico, with the permission of the Cardinal, conducted him thither. Then Stagio, having separated himself from the company of Domenico, received Guglielmo into his house, and the latter, for his first work in Arezzo, painted a picture of S. Lucia, in the chapel of the Albergotti Family, which is in the Episcopal Church of that city.[1] The subject of this work is the above-mentioned Saint, who is depicted together with San Silvestro, and both are so beautifully done, that they may be truly said to present the appearance, not of mere figures in coloured and transparent glass, but of most animated and life-like beings, fully equal, at the very least, to what we find accomplished in the most admired and excellent paintings. Of Guglielmo's works it is to be remarked, that in addition to his masterly method of treating the carnations, they exhibit other peculiarities, one of which I will now describe. It was his frequent custom to scale or grind away the glass in certain places, when, having removed the outer surface, he would afterwards colour that part with another hue; on red glass for example, thus scaled, he would impose a yellow colour, or would lay white or green on a blue glass, which is an exceedingly difficult operation in that branch of the art. By this process, the real or first colour is that which alone

[1] We have not ascertained precisely at what period Fra Guglielmo visited Arezzo, but it would appear that he went thither in 1519, for Gaye has discovered a document under date Octob. 31, of that year, relative to an engagement between the builders of the cathedral of Arezzo, and Fra Guglielmo. The following is a fragment of it:—"The builders of the cathedral have employed Master Guglielmo di Pietro to paint the glass windows, i. e., a window over the chapel of S. Francis; a window over the chapel of S. Matthew; a window over the chapel of S. Nicholas, at 15 lire per braccio. The glass must be prepared in the fire, not with oil; and he must have them finished before the June of 1520."—Carteggio Inedito.

appears on the one side, whether it be red, blue, or green, while the other, which has about the thickness of the blade of a knife, or something more, remains white. There are many who, from not having great practice, or facility in the handling, do not use a point of iron for scaling the glass, because they fear to break the panes; but, instead of this, and for greater security, these artists avail themselves of a copper wheel, to which an iron is affixed, and with which they gradually excoriate the glass by means of emery, until they leave nothing but the white surface of the glass which, by this method, is obtained in much purity. If, to the glass thus left white, the artist should then desire to impart a yellow colour, immediately before he places it in the fire for the burning, he lays on a coat of calcined silver, which has very much the colour of bole, and which he applies somewhat thickly; this, when placed in the fire, melts on the glass, to which, when perfectly fused, it attaches itself, penetrating the substance of the glass, and imparting a very beautiful yellow to the same. With these modes of proceeding, no master was better acquainted than the Prior Guglielmo, nor did any artist apply them with more skill and judgment than himself; and herein consists the difficulty, seeing that to paint or tinge the glass in colours, with oil or other vehicles, is of little or no moment, nor is it of great importance that the glass should be clear or transparent; but to heat them with fire, and so to manage that they shall resist the effects of rain, and shall be capable of perpetual endurance; this, indeed, is a labour which merits commendation. Highly worthy of praise, therefore, is this excellent master, seeing that there is no one in that vocation who has effected so much as himself, whether we consider his power of

invention, design, colour, or the general excellence of the work.

In the Episcopal Church of Arezzo, Guglielmo executed the large rose window whereon is depicted the Descent of the Holy Ghost and the Baptism of Christ by John.[1] He has represented Our Lord standing in the Jordan, and waiting on S. John, who has taken a vessel of water in his hand, with which he is about to baptize Our Saviour. An old man, already divested of his clothes, is standing near, in the act of taking off his shoes, whilst certain angels are taking charge of the Redeemer's garments. Over the entire group is the Almighty Father, who sends down the Holy Spirit on His Son.[2] This window is immediately over the baptismal font of the cathedral; and in the same building Guglielmo painted a window, whereon is represented the Resurrection of Lazarus. It is difficult to imagine how the master has been able to arrange so many figures in such appropriate attitudes, on a surface so very limited, nor can we fail to perceive the expression of terror and amazement in that crowd of people, at this calling of the dead to life. Their perception of the fetor exhaled from the body of Lazarus, is equally manifest; while the tears of emotion, and the rejoicing of his sisters, are also finally expressed.

[1] They still exist, but are somewhat injured. Such of them as have been broken, were substituted by white glass.

[2] These paintings were much damaged, but have been admirably restored by Raimondo Zaballi of Arezzo, an artist of our own times. Gaye, loc. cit., produces another document relating to two other windows painted by Fra Gugliel. It is dated June 1st, 1522: "One over the altar of S. Francis, and the other over the Baptistery. He must remove the actual windows, and have the whole work completed by next November. On the 3rd of March, 1524, he received for a painting (on glass) of the Woman taken in Adultery, and for a Flagellation, 660 lire."

In this work are many instances of those excoriations and over-laying of colours on the glass, which we have described above, and every part of the whole, even the most minute, does certainly exhibit the utmost animation, each in its separate kind and place. Whoever shall desire to ascertain of what the skilful hand of the Prior has been capable, let him examine the window of S. Matthew, and let him observe the admirable composition of the history there depicted; for in this he may imagine that he sees Christ truly in the flesh. The Saviour is represented as calling S. Matthew from the money-changer's bench, and the latter extending his arms—as one who would receive the Redeemer to his inmost heart—abandons the riches he has amassed, thus evincing his readiness to leave all things, and follow his Master. At the foot of a flight of steps is seen one of the Apostles lying asleep, while another is in the act of awaking him, which he does with extreme vivacity of movement. Equally excellent is the figure of San Piero, who is in conversation with San Giovanni, both of whom are so exquisitely beautiful, that they appear to be the work of divine hands. In this same window there are, besides, perspective views of temples, flights of stairs, and other accessories. The figures are so admirably grouped, and the landscapes so well depicted, that no one would ever suppose them to be mere paintings, but rather angelic productions sent down from heaven for the consolation of man! Guglielmo painted the window of San Antonio, and that of San Niccolo in the same church, both of which are exceedingly beautiful;[1] he also executed two others in that building. One of these represents the Saviour expelling the buyers and sellers

[1] These two windows do not exist.

from the Temple, the other is the history of the woman taken in adultery, and these works are truly admirable. Indeed, so many were the talents and good qualities of the Prior Guglielmo, and so highly was he appreciated by the people of Arezzo, that he finally formed the resolution of adopting that city as his home; and from a Frenchman, as he had originally been, he determined to become an Aretine.

At a later period, considering within himself that the art of painting on glass could not secure a long duration to the works of those who attach themselves thereto; and seeing that they are perpetually liable to destruction, Guglielmo conceived the desire of devoting himself to painting generally, and accordingly accepted a commission from the superintendents of the church of Arezzo, for the decoration, in fresco, of three very large vaultings, these being labours in which he hoped to leave an enduring memorial of his existence. When these works were finished, the people of Arezzo presented the master with a small estate, which had belonged to the Confraternity of S. Maria della Misericordia; it was situated near the town, and was an admirable site whereon to build houses. This, they desired, he should enjoy for the remainder of his life. They further decreed, that the work, on being finished, should be estimated by an artist of distinction, and that the superintendents of the Cathedral should then make over to Guglielmo the full sum thus awarded.[1] In this work the Prior was

[1] Marcillat painted two of these histories in May, 1524, and Ridolfo Ghirlandajo valued them at four hundred ducats. On the 10th of October, 1526, he undertook the painting of the six vaults; *i. e.*, *the small ones which are not painted*—they were to have been painted on a gold ground—and decorated with various ornaments, and he was to have received for the work seventy ducats, at seven lire per ducat. Gaye Carteggio.

desirous of showing what he could do, and resolved to have the pictures of very large size, in imitation of those executed by Michelangiolo, in the Sistine Chapel. He was, indeed, so fully possessed with the desire to attain to excellence in that branch of art, and to that end made efforts so zealous, that, although then fifty years old, he nevertheless improved by steady and constant progression, to such an extent, that he gave as manifest proof of power to understand the beautiful, as he had in his works furnished evidence of delight in the imitation of the good. In the three large vaultings, he represented the earlier events recorded in the beginning of the Old Testament, wherefore he afterwards depicted those related in the commencement of the New."[1]

These frescos that adorn the vault of the nave of the cathedral of Arezzo, still exist in fair preservation. They are characterised by excellence of design, richness and felicity of composition; but I regard their colouring as somewhat too feeble. Marcillat was not ignorant of oil painting, for he has left us a specimen of his powers in this style, in the picture of the Conception, which he executed for the church of S. Francis, in Arezzo. In this work Vasari lauds the vestments, and the life-like character of the heads "which," quoth he, "are so beautiful, that they must reflect eternal honour on him, even though they be the first work that he ever painted in oil."

Meanwhile, he never abandoned glass painting, and we will here enumerate a few of his latest works. In the church of S. Francis, in Arezzo, is the great rose[2] window,

[1] Mrs. Foster's Trans. of Vasari's Lives.

[2] The idea of the Rose was suggested, doubtless, by the miracle of S. Francis.—V. his Life.

which is, even now, in a very perfect state. He also painted the great window of the Dominican church, and here he has represented a vine, which, springing out of S. Dominic, exhibits, on its branches, all the saints of that Institute; on its summit is the B. V. M., and our Lord espousing S. Catherine of Siena. For this work, which was highly lauded, he would receive no money, as *he was under many obligations to the Preaching-Friars.* It no longer exists. He likewise painted some windows for the church of the Madonna delle Lagrime (of the Tears); and, also, for the church of S. Jerom and of S. Rocco. From Arezzo he sent a window to Florence, which was painted for the church of Santa Felicità, in that city;[1] another to Castiglion del Lago, and two or three to Perugia. And as he took great delight in architecture, he made many designs of public and private buildings for the citizens of Arezzo; he, also, executed the stone work of the two doors of the church of San Rocco, and the beautifully elaborated ornamentation (in stone) that was placed round Luca Signorelli's painting in the church of S. Jerom. He also executed one for the confraternity of the Trinity, in the chapel of the Crucifixion; together with an exquisite lavatory for the Sacristy. "Delighting in labour," continues Vasari, "and occupying himself continually, winter and summer, with mural paintings, a practice calculated to render the most robust unhealthy, Guglielmo suffered greatly from the humidity amidst which he worked; disease ensued, for which he was treated by physicians; but unable to endure the operation to which they submitted him, he sank beneath his

[1] When this window reached Florence, the Gesuati, who were great cultivators of this art, decomposed it, in order to learn the method employed by Fra Guglielmo.

sufferings, after a few days' illness, resigning his soul into the hands of Him who had given it; first receiving the sacraments of the Church, as befitted a good Christian, and making his will. Entertaining a particular veneration for the Eremite monks of Camaldoli, who have their abode on the summit of the Apennines, at the distance of twenty miles from Arezzo, or thereabout; to them it was that the Prior Guglielmo left his property and his body. His glasses, implements of labour, and drawings, he left to his disciple, Pastorino, of Siena, who had been with him many years."[1] The Prior died in 1537, aged sixty-two years. The life of his disciple, Pastorino, may be read in Baldinucci.[2] His other pupils were Maso Porro, of Cortona; Battista Borro, of Arezzo; and amongst those to whom he taught drawing and colouring, were Benedetto Spadari, and the biographer, Vasari.

We will not add to the encomiums which the latter has bestowed on this eminent artist, but will content ourselves with pointing to the beautiful windows in the cathedral of Arezzo, which, in our judgment, are at once his glory and his eulogium.

With him we close the series of the Dominican glass-painters. In the fourteenth century our friars were the zealous cultivators of this art; and every one will admit,

[1] Bottonio thinks that the window for the Dominican church must have been painted about 1525; and he adds:—"He also painted the Rose window for the cathedral of Perugia; and to him also is attributed the window of the chapel of the Rosary in our church." That of the cathedral was destroyed in the past century; that of the Dominicans no longer exists. Father Boarini remembers a window by Marcillat, in the chapel of San Lorenzo, in the church of San Domenico at Perugia.—V. Descriz. della Chiesa di San Domenico, p. 45; and Mrs. Foster's Trans. of Vasari.

[2] V. Notizie dei Professori del Disegno. v. 5.

that its glory culminated with Fra Guglielmo di Marcillat.[1]

CHAPTER XII.

Fra Paolino da Pistoja, disciple of Fra Bartolommeo della Porta.

Pistoja, a city renowned in letters and arms, famed for commerce, and blessed by Providence with nature's choicest gifts, balmy air, fertile soil, and a mellifluous idiom, cannot pride itself on having produced many celebrated artists; for of all the Italian cities this suffered most from internecine hates and rivalries. "Its history," says Contrucci, "is a horrid picture of bloodshed, conflicts, carnage the most barbarous, devastation, and ruins.[2] There is no heart, so hard, that will not weep

[1] The best works on glass-painting are the following:—Gessert die Glasmalerei in Frankreich; Le Veil, Art de la Peinture Sur verre; Lasteyrie, Histoire de la Peinture sur verre; Mrs. Merrifield's Trans. of an ancient MS. See also an admirable chapter on this art by the *learned parish priest* Oudin, in the Archeologie Chretienne, (Bruxelles, 1847,) a work that should be familiar to every priest. The oldest document extant, relating to glass-painting, is a letter written by the Abbot Gosbert de Teugersee, in Bavaria. It was composed between 983 and 1001. The best specimen of the art which Ireland possessed, was the window of S. Canice's cathedral, Kilkenny, which a barbarian named Axtle suffered his soldiers to smash, when Cromwell got possession of the city. We are glad to learn that the Rt. Rev. Dr. Foran, Bishop of Waterford, has recently decorated his cathedral with a very beautiful window, painted by Mr. Hardman, of Birmingham. This gentleman is entitled to our highest praise for his successful efforts to revive this grand, old art.

[2] For a splendid picture of these feuds and factions, see "Dr. Miley's Hist. of the Papal States," which we rejoice to say has been translated into French. See also Contrucci, Op., Edite ed Ined. Pistoja, 1841.

inwardly, while perusing the history of this lovely region. At the very moment when the Arts began to shake off barbarism, and assume their most graceful developments, the Pistojese were too much occupied with their detestable feuds to turn their attention to pursuits which cannot flourish 'mid the din of arms, and the war-shouts of factions. Nevertheless, it was on this soil that Giunta first saw the light, and it was because he *lived* and *died* in Pisa, that many have pronounced him to have been a native of the latter city.[1] Pistoja was remarkable for its encouragement of goldsmith's work; and in an age more propitious to art, it gave birth to that Paolino Signoracci, who imitated Fra Bartolommeo della Porta in painting, as well as in his monastic life. Being, therefore, about to write of this distinguished member of our institute, we deem it well to premise that if our performance be not in every respect perfect, it will, at least, be more copious than the very meagre notice which Tolomei has left us[2] of this famous artist.

Our Paolino was born in Pistoja, A.D. 1490. His father was Bernardino del Signoraccio, a mediocre painter, and a follower of the manner of Domenico del Ghirlandajo. Our friar was the last scion of his family.[3] He learned the rudiments of the art from his father, who was, probably, the best painter of his country. When, or where, he took the Dominican habit, we have not

[1] Sebastiano Ciampi has found a document which proves that Giunta was born in Pistoja, and that he painted there in 1202.

[2] Tolomei, Giuda Pistoja. Paolino's real name was Paolo, but his diminutive stature added a diminutive syllable to his name. He was also called il Frattino (the *little* friar).

[3] Razzi has written a chronicle of the Conv. of S. Dom. in Pistoja; and a friend has sent me some fragments of it which will be found in this Memoir.

been able to ascertain, as the conventual Chronicles of Prato and Pistoja have been lost; but after searching the Investment Books of Fiesole, and these of San Marco in Florence, and not finding his name, I have concluded that he, like Porta, must have passed his novitiate in the convent of San Domenico, at Prato. The superiors, seeing that the young Pistojese possessed great artistic talent, determined to place him under Fra Bartolommeo della Porta, that he might learn the art of painting from him; for they were anxious to keep alive in their cloisters that holy flame, which from the earliest moment of their existence, was fondly cherished by the Dominicans. Wherefore, having abandoned the study of divinity, for which he had not much aptitude, Fra Paolino, if Razzi be correctly informed, set out for Florence, A.D. 1503, in the thirteenth year of his age. Thus, it is possible, that he may have availed himself of the examples of the most distinguished painters of the Florentine school, and formed the acquaintance of the other painters, sculptors, and architects, with whom the modern Athens then abounded. I have already said that Fra Bartolommeo caused him to model in clay—nay, that he was, probably, assisted in this preparatory exercise by Fra Ambrogio della Robbia, who was excellent in this art, as is proved by such works of his as remain in Siena.[1] I consider that drawing ought to be associated with modelling, if an artist is desirous to become an excellent painter, and it may not be amiss to state that the latter was much more familiar to the ancients than it is to the moderns.

[1] In the first volume of these Memoirs, I placed Fra Ambrogio della Robbia amongst those whom Savonarola influenced to take the Dominican habit: this, however, was a simple conjecture. But I am delighted to find that this nephew of Lucca della Robbia, has left a beautiful specimen of his

The first essay that Fra Paolino made of it is dated 1513; at which period he was requested by his confreres to model two large statues which were destined for the little church of S. Mary Magdalene, in Pian di Mugnone. Fra Bartolommeo, probably, furnished the design of the figures, which were half the life size. Paolino, therefore, produced a S. Dominic, and a S. Mary Magdalene, which in chasteness of design, and beauty of the draperies, exhibit the manner of Porta. Signoracci coloured them in 1516, at which period they were placed in two niches, on either side of the grand altar.[1]

When Signoracci arrived in Florence, two other Dominicans, Fra Andrea, and Fra Agostino, were studying the art of painting, under Fra Bartolommeo.

Plastic skill in the church dello Spirito Santo, in Siena. In the archives of the Dominicans, now in the cathedral of Siena, we read—"In the time of Brother Robert Ubaldini, the annalist of San Marco. (MDIIII.) The Manger of the Lord was made for the church; it was executed by Fra Ambrogio de Rubia, whom the Prior and Fathers of the convent invited hither for that purpose," etc. This Manger, composed of vitrified terra-cotta, is now in the chapel of the Spaniards, which was painted in fresco by Razzi. In this work there are four figures, not counting the Infant, life size; there are also the two animals between which the Saviour was born. The head of S. Joseph is beautifully modelled. The figure of the shepherd is mediocre, but that of the Virgin and one of the shepherds (perhaps by another hand) may be said to be inferior.

[1] In the Credit and Debit book of the Hospice of S. Mary Magdalene, in Pian Mugnone, we find the following memoranda:—"June 17, 1516, Marco di Silvestro and Tommaso Ciachi executed the plaster-work over the Manger. . . . 19th of said month, the clay figures made by *little Paul, of Pistoja*, (then a mere youth) were set up in their places; though not baked, they are still very hard, for he made them three years before, and by him they were painted to the honour of God, S. Dom., and S. Magdalene." Under date, July 12, 1516, we find, "that he had finished the painting of them, and that they were secured with wires to prevent them falling." These memoirs further inform us that the figures for the *Manger* were executed by Andrea della Robbia, Fra Ambrogio's father.

Of the first of these, nothing has survived, and it would appear that he assisted Fra Bartol. in works of minor importance. The second associated himself with Fra Paolino—nay, sought to outshine him, but he never attained to more than mediocrity.[1] We have seen that Fra Bartol. set out for Rome in the spring of the year 1514, to behold the works of Raffaello and Michelangiolo. On his return to Florence, his state of health compelled him to go to the Dominican Hospice in Pian di Mugnone. The memoirs of that place record that he brought two disciples along with him, and that they there painted some histories of the Holy Fathers. Although the names of these two be not mentioned, we think it very likely that they were Fra Paolino and Fra Agostino. The pictures of the Holy Fathers which they painted, and which may have been designed by Fra Bartol. no longer exist. In a cell, however, of the upper dormitory, there is a fresco, much injured by retouching, which represents S. Thomas of Aquino, in the act of praying. This figure is well preserved. The manner is that of Fra Bartol. and as the design is very feeble, I regard it as the work of his disciples.

Nature did not give Signoracci extraordinary genius, and I look on him as rather poor in invention than

[1] Chron. Conv. S. Spiritus de Senis, A.D. MDII. "When Sacramoro of Rimini, was Prior of this convent . . . the lay-brothers Agostino and Andrea, Florentine painters, were sent for to decorate the new church. By their art and pious labour, the walls of the church were painted." It is necessary to remark, that two Dominican painters called Agostino, are recorded in the chronicles of the Order. One of them is Agostino di Paolo del Mugello, who was affiliated to the convent of San Marco. The other is designated Agostino di Paolo di Marco Macconi, or de'Macconi, of Pistoja, who, having been a secular painter, was received into the community at Fiesole, in 1499. I think it was the first of these who assisted Fra Paolino, in Siena.

otherwise. Nevertheless, the examples and precepts of his able master, and his intense application to study, raised him far above the countless tribe of mere aspirants. When he began to imitate Porta, the latter had abandoned his second manner, which was simple and graceful, and was following the style of the Michelangiolo school. Our Pistojese did not venture to proceed on this difficult road, which required consummate art, boldness, and spirit corresponding to the superabundance of life, which the artists of that age imparted to their works; whereas, Fra Paolino, whose soul was gentle, and whose genius was comparatively humble, simply aspired to be a good painter. For this reason, even in the pictures which he executed, after Porta's cartoons, we frequently find his first conception so modified, that although the colouring and draperies manifest Fra Bartolommeo's manner, the sweeter and more noble expression of the heads clearly announces the delicate pencil of Fra Paolino. Having finished the two terracotta figures in Pian di Mugnone, the Dominicans of the convent di Santo Spirito, invited Fra Paolino and Fra Agostino, to undertake a work of greater importance. In that year, 1516, a Master Cherubino Ridolfini da Narni, died in Siena, and his brother, Giovanni, wishing to adorn his sepulchre, (he was buried in Santo Spirito,) gave a sum of money to the Friars, in consideration of paintings intended for it. As it is likely that Fra Bartolommeo's many commissions would not allow him to proceed thither, he sent, in his stead, his two disciples, furnishing them with the designs of the history which they were to fresco in the cloister over Ridolfini's tomb. Having reached Siena, either at the end of August or the beginning of September, they began to paint a Crucifixion, with the B. V. M., and S. John the Evan-

gelist at either side; and at its foot, kneeling, S. M. Magdalene, and S. Catherine of Siena, all which figures are life-size. I won't call this a perfect picture; nevertheless, there are portions of it well executed, as for example, the figure of the B. V., and that of S. Catherine. The nude of the Christ, whose members are somewhat exaggerated, does not exhibit much study of anatomy, and the joints of the extremities evidence that feebleness of design which characterises the rest of Signoracci's works. The tinting, however, and the gracefulness of the draperies, are highly commendable. I cannot say so much for the figure of S. John, which is inferior in pencilling to the others; this was, probably, the work of Fra Agostino. For a long time this work was universally attributed to Fra Bartolommeo, and this fact reflects credit on his disciple; but the brothers Milanesi, both diligent investigators of their country's history, very recently discovered the names of the two painters in a book of memoranda pertaining to the aforesaid Archives.[1] Having returned to Florence, Fra Paolino, in the year

[1] "A.D. MDXVI. John Ridolfini da Narni, gave in alms for his brother, thirty-five lire. This brother was Master Cherubino, who, when he was about to receive his Doctoral degree in art and medicine, died at Siena, and chose this convent for his burial-place. John consented that this money should be expended on a painting of the Crucifixion, with four figures at the sides. He who painted it was Fra Paolo da Pistoja, and he was assisted by the lay-brother, Agostino. Under this Crucifixion they buried the body of Master Cherubino. This Crucifixion should have cost much more if it had not been executed by our friars. John did not expend much money on it, but he gave some vestments to the convent to prove his gratitude to Fra Paolo and Agostino. They painted it in Septem. and Octob., 1516."

The inscription on the tomb is the following:—

"Sena vetus Cherubin
Genuit quem Narnia Gentis
Clara Rodolphine,
Febre rapit clario (sic)."

following, was bitterly afflicted by the death of his master who, as we have already said, departed this life in October, 1517. This was a great loss to Signoracci, for I hold it to be indubitable, that if he had been able to avail himself for a longer period of the examples and precepts of Fra Bartolommeo, he must have triumphed over that feebleness of design which characterises all his subsequent works.[1] Having got possession of all Porta's cartoons and designs, he was enabled by means of them, to execute very many paintings. At this period he set about completing some pictures that his master had left either only designed, or unfinished. Amongst these was the Deposition from the Cross, now in the Florentine Gallery, marked No. 48. Up to a very recent period it was thought to have been by Fra Bartol., but the Memoirs of the Hospice of S. M. Magdalene, clearly prove that it was only out-lined by Porta, and coloured, after his death, by Fra Paolino. It was placed over the grand altar of that church, July 21st, 1519.[2] This painting represents the Virgin pressing the lifeless form of her Son to her bosom; on her right is S. John the Evangelist; on her left S. M. Magdalene together with S. Dominic, and S. Thomas of Aquino; (the latter figures are a *fuor d'opera.*) I know not whether it should be attributed to the wasting hand of time, or to

[1] The Chron. of the Conv. of S. Dom. di Pistoja, written by F. Razzi, states, that Fra Paolino studied in S. Marco, under Fra Bartol. della Porta, for fourteen years. This cannot be, for it would lead us to believe that Fra Paolo took the habit when only twelve years old.

[2] Credit and Debit Book of the Hospice of S. Magdal. in Pian di Mugnone. "On the vigil of S. M. Magd. (1519) a picture designed by Fra Bartol. was placed over the altar of our church. As death prevented Fra Bartol. from finishing it, it was coloured by Fra Paolo da Pistoja. It contains the following figures:—the Virgin with her only Son (dead), and S John. and M. Magdalene, together with S. Dominic and S. Thom. of Aquino."

retouching, but it is certain that the colouring of this picture is very feeble; nor can it be classed among the best things designed by Porta, and finished by Signoracci. In said church there is now a beautiful copy of it, which diminishes our regret for the absence of the original.

I do not know whether it was during his master's life-time, or after his death, that Fra Paolino coloured the large and beautiful picture of the Assumption, which the Dominicans still retain in S. Maria del Sasso, near Bibbiena. It is generally thought that Fra Bartol. painted the upper half of this work, and Fra Paolino the other—*i. e.*, the under half; but documents discovered by Vincenzo Fineschi, leave no doubt that it was only designed by Porta, and that it was entirely coloured by his disciple.[1] Having seen many works by the Pistojese, and, also, the picture of S. Paul, which he executed in his own country, I must confess, that none of his paintings possesses more beauty of tinting, or delicacy of colouring, than does this of the Assumption. Fineschi attributes to Signoracci the picture S. Vincent Ferrer, which is now in the same church, though it was, for a long time, supposed to be the work of Porta; but we can claim, without any doubt, for Fra Paolino, the painting over the altar of S. Lucia, in the lower church del Sasso; this represents the Virgin, with the Infant in her arms, S. Lucia kneeling, and some Dominican Saints, who, according to Fineschi, are portraits of the religious of that convent. The painter has here traced his initials, and the year MDXXV.[2] Bearing the same date, was another picture, now lost, which the same painter

[1] Compend. Stor. Crit. Sopra 2 Immagini di S. Maria nella Chiesa di S. M. del Sasso presso Bibbiena.

[2] F. P. O. P. (Frat. Paulus. Ordinis. Prædicat).

produced for the novitiate of S. Domenico in Fiesole. It represented the Virgin kneeling, and adoring the Infant Saviour, who was held by an Angel. On the sides were S. Joseph, and S. Agnes the Dominican.[1]

If we are to take for granted, that the two large paintings, hitherto in the suppressed Dominican convent at S. Gemignano, one of which passed to the church of S. Agostino, and the other, to that of S. Lucia at Barbiano, were really the work of Signoracci, as many learned in art assert, we must believe that he executed them at the same period, as we find the date 1525, traced thereon in letters of gold. Not having seen them, I can only speak of them from the description with which Gabrielli of Siena, has kindly furnished me. These paintings induce me to think, that Fra Paolino had resolved to imitate the enlarged manner of Porta, and to essay that grandiose style of composition for which Fra Bartol. was so renowned. They both represent the Virgin, seated on a throne, with some Saints at either side of Her; and on the step of the throne there is a little angel playing a lute. This subject he frequently repeated in his own country and elsewhere.

Whilst Signoracci was employed at these, and other works, in the calm silence of his cell, the most terrible events were occuring abroad in the world. I will not speak of Germany, or of the many other regions of Europe, in which religious discords occasioned direful carnage; nor of Rome, which suffered more from the

[1] Chron. Conv. S. Dom. de Fesulis, 1525. "The chapter-room of the Novitiate was enlarged and rebuilt . . . . the altar-piece of the chapter-room of the Novitiate was painted. It represents the B. V. M. kneeling and adoring the Infant, who is supported by an angel, and also the figures of S. Joseph, and S. Agnes V. It was executed by Paul of Pistoja, a brother of our Order."

atrocities of Charles V., than it did from Attila's barbarians; but, as for Florence, it was a pitiable spectacle to see it, ruined by those who should have been the truest defenders of its liberty and glories. The Medici, nowise corrected by exile, never sympathised with their native soil in its terrible sufferings; and though thrice driven across its frontier, they returned as often with arms in their hands to enslave and degrade it. Thus was the fair city of the Arno ultimately doomed to fall into the hands of the infamous Alexander. After a long and bloody siege, it presented a scene of woe and desolation unprecedented since the days of Nero. When we remember that the counsellor and sycophant of this monster (Duke Alexander) was this very Guiccardini, whose blood congealed while he was depicting the atrocities of Duke Valentino, we are constrained to ask ourselves what we ought to think of this "Father of Italian History!" It is probable that Fra Paolino did not chose to be a spectator of these dreadful disasters, for we do not find him in Florence at this period, but wandering from place to place, and finally returning to the soil of his nativity, after many peregrinations. It would appear that he visited Viterbo, as the chronicles of the convent of S. Maria della Quercia, (at that time belonging to the Congregation of Tuscany,) inform us, that he completed a picture which Porta had left unfinished, either when he was going to Rome or returning thence. We pray the reader to recall what we have said anent this, in Porta's life;[1] and we will here subjoin the original notice, taken from the chronicles of that convent:—

"A. D. 1543, when F. Thom. Buoninsegni was Prior,

[1] See Book iii. chap. vi. of this vol.

the painting and figure of our Lady was placed, where it now actually is, and the painter was Father Fra Paolino da Pistoja, of our Order, and he received, by way of payment, 45 gold crowns; although, it is said, that the design was furnished by Fra Bartol., who also was a lay brother of our order:[1] and that this picture may be more distinctly known, we will mention, that on its summit, in a medallion, is painted God the Father in the act of blessing. He is surrounded by Angels. In the under part of the picture is a most beautiful Virgin, who kneels, and is crowned by the Lord, who is encircled by many angels; under, these are all our saints kneeling, together with many other saints. This is deemed a very beautiful work, by those who are skilled in the art, and it is known that it was executed by Fra Bartol." The friars of this convent, not satisfied with having engaged Signoracci to perfect this picture, charged him with the execution of another of his own invention. It is mentioned in the chronicles thus:—"The chapel that is under that of Val di Marco, of which Caprino di Mont'alto is patron, was painted by Fra Paolino da Pistoja, and he was commissioned to execute the work by said Caprino, who thus expressed his gratitude for a favour which he had received from the Madonna. The chapel is called, Della Pietà."[2] These words do not explain whether he frescod the chapel, or painted a picture on canvas or panel. Certain it is, however, that that church possesses

[1] This is plainly a mistake of the chronicler, for Fra Bartol. and Fra Paolino were not lay-brothers, but Deacons.

[2] Lib. delle Chroniche della Chiesa del Conv. della Quercia, M. S. The painting mentioned by the chronicle is that which is now over the altar of the choir. As well as I remember, it resembles in beauty of colouring the Assumption that is in S. M. del Sasso in Bibbiena.

only the picture in the choir, which was outlined by Porta, and coloured by Fra Paolino.

Having completed these works, it appears that Signoracci returned to his native place, where he executed many pictures that still exist. Having had ample opportunity for examining them, in 1844, we are the better enabled to describe them.

In the church of S. Dominic there is now a picture, which has been removed from the sacristy into the choir.[1] The conception of this work resembles that of the splendid picture which Fra Bartolommeo painted for the church of San Marco, and which is now in the Palatine Gallery. Like the former, the Virgin is here represented seated on a throne, pressing to her bosom the nude Infant, who, with childish gracefulness, espouses S. Catherine, of Siena: and this Saint is depicted as a very beautiful maiden. It is very little inferior to the figure of S. M. Magdalene, whom he represents kneeling on the opposite side. Surrounding the Virgin, are saints Appollonia, Dominic, Peter M., and Cecily. Although the composition of this picture is not entirely original, nevertheless the figures are well grouped, and the design is correct, though the colouring has sustained some injury.[2] Much more worthy of observation, is an Adoration of the Magi, which is in the chapel of the most Holy Sacrament, near the grand altar, in the same church; this is, in every respect, an original painting, and deserves to be classed among Signoracci's best productions. Tolomei, who saw

[1] It is said that this was executed for the monastery of S. Catherine, and that it was removed thence to the church of S. Domenico.

[2] Razzi writes that Fra Paolino painted three pictures for his church of S. Dom.—V. Stor. degli Uomini Illustri. It is probable that the third is that which (in the same church) represents a Crucifixion with the Virgin and S. Thom. of Aq. This work has been greatly injured by time and retouching.

the ancient memoirs of this convent before its suppression, affirms, that the picture was executed in 1539, when the artist was only 36 years of age; but this is manifestly an error, for he himself writes, that Fra Paolino was born in 1490, which proves that he must have reached his forty-ninth year, when this picture was finished.[1]

The composition of this work is very simple. The Virgin is seated on an embasement of stone; She has the undraped Infant on Her knees, and presents Him to the first of the Magi, who, prostrated before Him, seems yearning to imprint a kiss on His feet. The figure of the Virgin is fascinating, and characterised by such grace and purity, that I have rarely seen any Virgin more exquisitely delineated. The Infant, if we except the tiny arms, which are a little too short, is, in every other particular, well designed, and exceedingly beautiful. He has placed the other figures—*i. e.*, S. Joseph, the two Magi, and the persons of their retinue, behind the embasement; and nothing can excel the beauty of a figure of a young man who is on the left of the spectator. We see only the profile of this youth; and Tolomei, on the authority of the memoirs of the convent, states that this is the portrait of the artist. The ground of the picture represents (on the right) the habitation of the Virgin, the perspective of which is very fine; and here we behold a multitude of graceful little figures on the steps of the stairs and on the balconies, all of whom are hastening, as it were, to witness this spectacle. On the left there is a landscape which, if not beautiful, is certainly mediocre. The design in this picture is,

[1] Guida di Pistoja.

in my judgment, better than that of any of Fra Paolino's other works. The colouring is harmonious, although the chiaroscuro be somewhat defective; the extremities are well outlined, and the heads are more vivacious than these in his other paintings. Nevertheless, there is a dryness in the outlines, and a considerable amount of harshness in the folds of the draperies. This latter defect is singularly visible in this instance.

But the best of Fra Paolino's works is the grand painting now in the church of San Paolo, at Pistoja, which may be regarded as his *chef d'œuvre*. Here, more than elsewhere, he shows himself to have been a follower and imitator of Fra Bartolommeo della Porta; and if, after seeing the other paintings that he produced for oratories and churches, in his own country, we be frequently disposed to pronounce him mediocre, this work, in the church of San Paolo, and the Adoration of the Magi, must entitle him to a distinguished place among the best artists of the sixteenth century.

The conception of this work is not altogether original, but bears a strong resemblance to that enlarged style of composition which was so much appreciated by Fra Bartolommeo. He has here represented two little Angels, (undraped,) supporting the hangings of a canopy, under which the Virgin is enthroned as "Queen of Heaven." Her mien is majestic, her countenance is radiant with maternal affection, and she holds the nude Infant on her knees. At foot of the throne he placed four holy women; two on the step, and two on the ground. They are S. Catherine, V. and M., S. Apollonia, S. M. Magdalene, and S. Agnes, V. and M. Around the throne he arranged, symmetrically, a choir of holy men. On the Virgin's right are S. Paul, S. John, (B.)

S. Dominic, and a figure, of which we see only the profile: the latter is thought to be a portrait of Savonarola—a tribute of homage, perhaps, to the virtues and the sufferings of this great man. On the left he painted S. Peter, S. James, S. Lorenzo, S. Antonino, and another Saint whom we are not able to determine. At foot of the throne, and seated on its step, is a little Angel, playing a lute, much in the style of Porta's compositions. I grieve to say that he has here depicted the two principal figures, (the Apostles Peter and Paul,) as it were turning their backs on the Virgin, as though they were regardless of her august presence. This is a grave error, as it diminishes that unity which should pervade a picture just as much as a dramatic composition. The whole work is finished in the enlarged style; and we cannot but admire the management of light and shadows, as well as the perspective, which is really admirable. In the expression of the heads he is very variable, and in that of the Virgin and her Son, we perceive the gracefulness of Raffaello, but as to the others, he might have infused more life into them. The draperies, too, are here and there somewhat dry and harsh. But that which presents the most grateful illusion to the eye, is the shading of the superficies on which the perspective lines are admirably drawn. No one can contemplate this picture without feeling himself impressed with reverence in presence of such a solemn scene! Were one to be hypercritical, he might find fault with the angel playing the lute, whose attitude is not natural; and with the hands of S. Lorenzo, which are defective in proportions; but still more so with the hand of S. Peter, who holds a book, for, indeed, this hand seems as though it were broken. Despite these blemishes, and the absence of originality, this picture, in

its ensemble, reflects honour on the painter and on the land of his birth.[1]

The works we have enumerated, were quite enough for Fra Paolino's glory; and a more copious account of them may be found in Tolomei.[2] About four years ago a fresco, coated over with whitewash, was discovered in the refectory of the convent of S. Domenico in Pistoja. It represented some passages in the life of S. Dominic, which Repetti erroneously asserted to be a Supper of the Apostles, habited as Dominicans. It was thought to have been the work of Fra Paolino; but as it was inferior to his other works, it was once more buried under liquid lime.[3]

From all we have said, I think, it clearly follows that our painter was somewhat feeble in design, (particularly of the nude,) and not very fertile in invention, though brilliant and vigorous in colouring. In linear perspective he was second to none; nor can it be denied that he was sufficiently versed in the treatment of the *real*. In his draparies he was a close imitator of Porta; and his Virgins, by far excel these of the latter in devoutness—nay, and in celestial beauty. He adopted a variety of

[1] On the step of the throne we read: "Opus F. Pauli. de Pist. Or. Præd., MDXXVII." This painting was executed for the convent of S. Dom. in Pistoja; but not being suited to the place for which it was destined, it was sold to the Prioral Church of San Paolo. A few years ago the government ordered it to be restored.

[2] The Guida di Pistoja mentions many other pictures by Fra Paolino; but the incorrectness of their design, especially in the nude, forbids us to recognise them as his.

[3] We have omitted mentioning a picture attributed to Fra Paolo, which is now in the Flor. Academy, for we deem it to have been by another hand. It represents an Assumption, and the Virgin in the act of giving her cincture to S. Thom. the Apostle. It is marked No. 53, and is said to have belonged to the suppressed monastery di San Vincenzo d'Annalena.

manners, both in colouring and composition, and we are sometimes almost led to mistake his figures and conceptions for these of Fra Bartolommeo.

Fra Paolino closed his days in the silence and peace of the cloister, devoting his time to religious exercises, and the cultivation of art; and we feel particular pleasure in being able to state that in this respect, he did not resemble the three Dominican artists already mentioned, who, having cast off their habits, suffered themselves to be swayed by the influences of a most corrupt age. Like Porta, and the other religious of that congregation, who cultivated painting, Fra Paolino received only the order of Deacon. The ancient memoirs relate that the Pistojese expended the sums he received by the sale of works, in erecting a little cloister, in the convent of S. Domenico, in his native city; and also, on a portion of the grand cloister, and the Hospice. He, likewise, contributed to the repairs of the organ, and to the ornamentation of the church. Razzi describes Signoracci thus:—"He was a good religious, simple, upright, devout, modest, and obedient." Another proof of Fra Paolino's exemplarity is, that he was much esteemed by that sanctified virgin, Catherine de Ricci, a sister of our Institute, who was his contemporary in Prato, and who subsequently was enrolled among the canonised saints of the Church. At the latter period of his life, it would appear that he formed the acquaintance of sister Plautilla Nelli, the Dominican nun and paintress of S. Catherine's in Florence. At his death, he bequeathed her all Fra Bartolommeo's designs. He departed this life, in his own country, on the night of the 3rd of August, the vigil of the feast of S. Dominic, A.D. 1547, in the fifty-seventh year of his age.[1] His

[1] See Document.

fellow-citizens, to attest their appreciation of his rare excellence, caused a bronze medal to be struck in his honour; and Lanzi tells us that he saw it along with others of the most illustrious denizens of Pistoja.[1]

CHAPTER XII.

Fra Damiano da Bergamo, the celebrated Intarsiator.—His Works in his own Country, in Bologna, and elsewhere.—His Disciples.

As we proceed in this work, we are cheered by a hope that our efforts shall do more than merely fill up the lacunae which are to be found in the History of Italian Arts. These cowled painters, sculptors, and architects, who, in the silence of the cloister, divided their time between labour and prayer; who kept alive the sacred fire of Art, and who, having left on earth such splendid monuments of their intellects and hands, sank into graves which shroud their very names in mysterious obscurity, have bequeathed a noble lesson not only to the Friars; but also, to every other artist, who rightly estimates the evanescent pleasures of this life, and would fain seek imperishable glory in the bosom of Religion. It is true that the Angelico, Fra Bartolommeo, and Signoracci, rivalled the most eminent artists of their age, but their chiefest merit is that they left behind them worthy imitators and copyists of their virtues. And, indeed, this age of ours, so turbulent,

[1] Hist of Painting. Flor. Sch., 2nd Epoch. This medal, executed by Vitoni, was afterwards sold, and we have not discovered the actual possessor. This I have on the authority of Giuseppe Tigri of Pistoja, to whom I am indebted for various notices of Fra Paolino.

vain, and frivolous, is far more in need of grand examples than of new theories. We are now about to speak of an artist, who, at a period, when everything conspired to debase Italy, and when craven-hearted traitors were fawning on the Stranger who trampled us under his feet, had the manliness—poor Friar as he was—to give Charles V. such a lesson, as must have surprised his Cæsarean majesty. This was that Fra Damiano da Bergamo, who excelled all his contemporaries in the art of Tarsia; and who, even after the lapse of three centuries, is still in possession of a glory which time has not been able to dim or diminish. Of him, therefore, we will treat with all possible accuracy—first premising such notices as we deem opportune for the illustration of his life.

That sort of work, called *Intarsia*, and known to the ancients, under the generic appellation of "Opus Sectile," is intimately identified with the art of conjoining pieces of marble in *mosaic*. I have not, however, been able to ascertain whether the ancients were familiar with what we term Tarsia. In times nearer to our own, this art began to be very much cultivated in Italy, at the period when Brunellesco was perfecting perspective. Benedetto da Maiano, the renowned sculptor, took the greatest delight in this sort of work, and cultivated it zealously, as may be seen by the very beautiful armories which he executed for the sacristy of the Florentine cathedral; and also by the doors of an apartment in Palazzo Vecchio, whereon he wrought the portraits of the Dante and Petrarca, out of pieces of wood conjoined; not to speak of the stupendous work described by Vasari, which the same artist brought to the court of Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary,[1] But the Tuscans, who were

[1] V. Vasari's Life of Maiano.

devoted to far nobler and more durable works, left Tarsia to the Venetians, who brought it to the rarest perfection. Padua, Venice, Trevigi, and Verona, were decorated with the most glorious specimens of this art, and for these we are indebted, in a great measure, to three Olivetan monks, the most distinguished of whom was Fra Giovanni da Verona. We will here take occasion to record one proof of his excellence in this branch of art. Pope Julius II., desiring to decorate the benches and doors of the Vatican Palace with tarsia, invited Fra Giovanni to Rome, and the court ordered Raffaello to furnish the designs of all these works, which reflect so much honour on the Friar.[1] Any one who has seen the postergals in the choir of the cathedral of Siena, removed thither from the convent of Monte Oliveto, cannot fail to recognize the rare excellence of this artist. In fact, every perfection that tarsia can attain, particularly in perspective, is most clearly shown in the stalls of this choir. I might mention many other Italian artists who executed very beautiful works of tarsia in the choirs of the Chartreuses, of Pavia, and Bologna; and, likewise, in the church of S. Francis, at Assisi;[2] but particularly in the choir of the cathedral of Città di Castello, the tarsie of which are believed to have been elaborated after the designs of Raffaellino dal Colle.[3] But as productions of this sort are almost infinite in Italy, and as we do not wish to be prolix, it may suffice to state that all those who cultivated this beautiful style of sculpture,

[1] V. The Life of Raffaello.

[2] The choir of S. Francesco di Assisi is the work of Domenico Indovini d Sanseverino, concerning whom see Amico Ricci, Mem. degli Artist, dell M. d'Ancona.

[3] It was executed by various artists at various periods. Mancini Istruz. Stor. Pitt. di Città di Castello.

(and as such it has been highly extolled in Cicognara's History,[1]) either confined themselves to works in perspective, as being best calculated to heighten the illusion, and in this particular, Fra Giovanni da Monte Oliveto was a sovereign master; or, they devoted themselves to produce histories and figures: and in this latter branch, we may safely assert that no one ever excelled Fra Damiano da Bergamo. In fact, he was not only perfectly able to conjoin the pieces of wood, but he also knew how to impart such beauteous colouring to the histories which he shaped out of them, that he may be said to have raised Tarsia to the dignity of painting.

The early years of this artist are shrouded in densest darkness, nor do we know the year of his birth, his parents, or their condition. All we have ascertained of him is the name of his natal place; for it was usual among the Mendicant Friars, in the two first ages of their existence, to take not their family name, but that of the region in which they were born. Count Tassi, who has written much concerning the artists of Bergamo, confesses that he vainly sought for the early history of our Intarsiatore; though, sooth to say, his researches were anything but accurate. He conjectures, however, that Fra Damiano was born about 1500, a conjecture which we cannot entertain, since we find that he was far-famed for his works in 1527. For my own part, I would rather say, that the year of his birth was in, or about, 1490. We are indebted to the anonymous author of the Notices of Design, during the first half of the XVI. century, published by Morelli, the librarian of the Marciana, in Venice, for a very singular discovery, by which we have been able to learn who it was that taught Fra Damiano the art of Tarsia. After mentioning some important artistic works

[1] Stor. della Scult. v. 5, p. 524.

which exist in the church of S. Domenico in Bergamo, he remarks—"The intarsiated benches of the principal chapel were executed by Fra Damiano of Bergamo, a Dominican lay-brother, who was the disciple of Fra . . Schiaron, in Venice. The designs were furnished by Trozo di Monza, Bernardo da Trevi, Bramantino, and others; and they are histories of the Old Testament in perspective."[1] Hence, we infer that Fra Damiano was the disciple of an Illyrian Friar, probably a Dominican; and that he came to Venice to learn this art; unless we are to suppose, that this Sclavonian (Schiavone) friar was so called, not because of his birth-place, but because of his family's cognomen.

The earliest notices which we have of Fra Damiano, represent him, not in his own country, but in Bologna, where this artist spent the greater part of his life. We find the following entry in an old book belonging to the convent of S. Dominic, in the last-named city:—"Ann. 1518, Brother Damiano da Bergamo, a most skilful man in works of Tarsia—a lay-brother, was received into this convent." The date (1518, which appears in Tassi's work) must be a typographical error; for in April, 1842, I myself discovered an ancient volume of the Counsels of that very convent, when I was collecting materials for this Memoir, and in that volume the following entry met my eye:—"October 24, 1528, Fra Damiano da Bergamo was received as a member of the convent, by Father Stefano da Bologna, the Prior, after having obtained faculties from the Vicar of the Order, &c. This is the

[1] Morelli's work was published in Bassano in 1800. Tassi says that the only remains of Fra Damiano now existing in Bergamo, are the little pictures (*in tarsia*) which adorn the stalls of the choir of the Dominicans. They were removed from the old church of S. Stefano in 1561. They are inferior to these which he executed in Bologna.—V. Tassi's Vite degli Architeti, Bergam.

Fra Damiano who has executed the benches of the choir so beautifully, that they are the wonder of the world."[1] Hence, we may reasonably conclude, that the Dominicans, desiring to adorn their church in Bologna, with traceries and tarsie, invited their confrere thither, and affiliated him to that convent, in order to secure his affections for it. Indeed, the year of his affiliation corresponds with that in which he commenced these works; and we may easily form a notion of the high esteem in which his brethren held Fra Damiano, from the fact of their preferring him to another Dominican Intarsiator, named Antonio Asinelli, who, about 1520, assisted Paolo Sacco da Crema, at the works in the choir of S. Giovanni al Monte.

We have not been able to determine precisely at what period our artist came to Bologna, but he was certainly there in 1527, or, perhaps, somewhat earlier. The works in the new choir were not begun till 1528; and, before engaging him at them, the religious requested him to give them a sample of his handicraft. This essay was to be made on seven stalls, which were to be finished, according to excellent designs, in the most exquisite tracery; and others were to be similarly executed, provided he acquitted himself well in the first. He, therefore, designed the architecture of the same—that is to say, the great cornices, and the little pilasters, under which he chiselled a double embasement. On the panel of the postergals,[2] and at foot of the benches, he executed fourteen histories, some great and some small, and also seven heads of saints. On the first stall he composed the history of a saint, but whether it is that of S. Petronius, Bishop of Bologna, or that of S. Niccolo' di Barri, the

[1] Lib. Consil. Sti. Dom. Bononiæ, MS., it commences ad ann. 1459.

[2] It is almost superfluous to tell the reader that the *postergal* is the back part of the stall—*post tergum*.

titular of that church, we have not been able to determine. On the embasement he represented, in small figures, the Sacrifice of Isaac, which is a most rare work. Under it, he carved a head of S. John Baptist. In the second stall he executed a passage from the life of S. Niccolo'; on its base, the Baptism of J. C.; and under it, a head of S. Dominic. On the third stall, he represented the Stoning of S. Stephen; on its base, Adam and Eve in the terrestrial paradise; and on its lowest part, a head of S. Peter. On the fourth, he wrought the Conversion of S. Paul; together with an Adoration of the Magi; and an Agnus Dei. On the fifth, he represented Magdalene at the feet of J. C in the hall of the Pharisee; the base of this stall is beautified with an angel expelling Adam and Eve from paradise; and at its foot is a head of S. Paul. On the sixth, he represented the Martyrdom of S. Catherine; on its base, the Murder of S. Peter of Verona; and at foot of same stall, is a head of a Saint. On the seventh stall, he executed the Marriage feast of Cana; on the base, Moses receiving the tables of the law; and at foot, the head of S. Alexander.

In these productions Fra Damiano proved himself such an excellent carver, joiner, and painter of wood that he far surpassed all his predecessors—nay, and all those who have succeeded him in this art. Up to that period all the artificers in this style of work, contented themselves with executing perspectives, and so joining the pieces (of wood), that they formed profiles; giving the whole surface the appearance of a single piece, though it was composed of many. Moreover, in all their histories they used only two colours, black and white; whereas, Fra Damiano discovered a method of tinting the wood with various colours; in this particular far excelling even Fra Giovanni da Monte Oliveto. Damiano

in fact, was the first who employed sublimate of arsenic and oil of sulphur;[1] by means of which he coloured and shaded his little histories so well, that they seem to have been executed by a bold and flowing pencil. In the Seven Postergals, already mentioned, we behold exquisite beauty of design, richness and variety of composition, and the very perfection of tracery in its minutest details; such as plants, herbs, animals, friezes, and ornamentation of buildings. Some of these histories, the Marriage of Cana, for example, look like sketches of Paolo Veronese's paintings; nor do I think that there exist, anywhere, more beautiful works than these. Nothing can excel the grouping and the draping of the figures, or the richness and elegance of the architecture. Here we have the most perfect imitation of every sort of marble on the pavement, in the columns, and throughout all the buildings. It is true, that our Friar did not design the histories; but we cannot but laud him for procuring the very best, and for availing himself of the plans of the celebrated architect Vignola.[2] To all this let us add the works in arabesque, the ornamentations, and the traceries of the cornices particularly, which are a miracle of human patience and good taste. Had Tassi, when in Bologna, examined these productions more accurately, they would have given him some valuable hints for the chronology of Fra Damiano's life. In the first stall the artist signed himself, in this fashion:—"Frater Damianus de Bergamo faciebat." In the history of the Pharisee's banquet, a little scroll is suspended by a most delicate thread, from the vault of the chamber, and we read

[1] See Vasari, Introduction to the Lives.

[2] Florent Le Comte states that Vignola, the celebrated architect, was then in Bologna, and that he exeuted some designs for Guiccardini the historian, which the latter gave to Fra Damiano, who *intarsiated* them.

thereon, "1528," which evidently denotes the period when the carver commenced the work. At foot of the first stall, where he carved the head of S. John, we find, A.D. 1530, the year in which he completed his first essay; that is to say, after six years of toil. This is still more distinctly specified in the last stall, at foot of which he executed an open book, bearing this inscription:—"This work was begun under the auspices of the R. F. Stephen Fuscari, and was completed M.D.XXX." On the decorations of one of the pilasters, we find written:—"Fra Damiano da Bergamo;" and on another, "Fra Steph. Fos." On the base of another little pilaster is traced:—"Tre. K. I.P.E., coronabatur (what time Charles the Emperor was crowned.") It was in that very year, (1530,) that Pope Clement VII. placed the imperial diadem on the head of Charles V. As this fact is intimately connected with the history of our artist, we must say a few words anent it.

The aspect of Rome was truly pitiable at this period, for the Imperial troops had shed the blood of its inhabitants, and committed the most direful atrocities within its temples and piazzas. The Pontiff was thunderstruck and humiliated—all Italy was desolated by continuous wars—and Bologna had sustained all the horrors of famine.[1] In the midst of all these tribulations the Emperor came to Bologna to be crowned. Pope Clement VII. preceded him, and the monarch was followed by a countless train of Italian and German

[1] The Dominicans brought all their church plate to the mint, in order to have it turned into money; and they adopted this course for the sake of the people who were perishing of hunger. Some of the coins minted at the period, still exist. They bear the arms of the Order and of Bologna; and the following is the legend:—"Ex collato aere de rebus sacris et prophanis in œgenorum subsidium MDXXIX, Bononia." On the reverse, "Rei frumentariæ cogente inopia."

Princes; nay, the very soldiers who had sacked and desecrated the holy city, marched in the triumphant procession of the Emperor. On the 5th of November, 1529, Charles V. presented himself to the Pontiff; and it is said that when their eyes met, they both turned pale. His Majesty then solemnly proclaimed that he had no part in the acts of Carlo di Bourbon, and that the latter had outraged the Vicar of Christ, without his consent; . . . . that he had never sanctioned such proceedings, and that the recollection of them caused him the most poignant pain. He then proclaimed to the whole universe the profound reverence that he entertained for the representative of Christ. It were hard to say whether Pope Clement credited these protestations; he certainly embraced the Emperor; but there be some who write that that embrace sealed the hapless destinies of the Florentine Republic!

Amid all this pomp and festivity, the Pontiff and Emperor took special pleasure in contemplating works of Art; for it then put forth all its most beautiful developments to solemnize this memorable event. Tiziano, Alfonzo, Lombardi, Bagnacavallo, Giacomo, Francia, and that most capricious of painters, Amico Aspertini, were then in Bologna. The Pope enquired for the celebrated sculptress, Properzia de' Rossi, and he was told (to his great chagrin) that she had died a few days before. On the 5th of December, 1529, the Emperor visited the shrine of S. Dominic; and after having contemplated the *chefs d' œuvres* which adorn the temple of our holy Founder, he paused to admire Fra Damiano's traceries and tarsie. He could not bring himself to believe that these little histories and heads were composed of pieces of wood conjoined, and to convince himself, he unsheathed his dagger and chipped off a portion of the

work. To commemorate the fact, these pieces have never been replaced.[1] Such was his admiration of Damiano's handicraft, that he determined to visit him in person, after the ceremony of the coronation.

On the 7th of March, A.D. 1530, the Emperor, accompanied by Alfonso d' Este, Duke of Ferrara, and some Princes of his court, proceeded to the Dominican convent;[2] and halting before the humble cell of Fra Damiano, knocked, and demanded admittance. The Friar opened the door, and just as the Emperor entered, he closed it quickly.—"Hold," said the Emperor, "you have shut out the Duke of Ferrara, who accompanies me." "I knew very well that it was he," replied the lay-brother, "and it is because I know him, that I will not permit him to stand under the vault of my cell!" "What?" asked Charles, "have you reason to complain of him?" "Hear me Sire," answered Fra Damiano; "when I was coming from Bergamo to Bologna, in order to execute the works in the choir, I brought with me these few tools, which are absolutely necessary for the practice of this art, in the exercise of which I hope to spend my life worthily. Well, I had scarcely set foot on the territory of Ferrara, when the officers of the Duke compelled me—poor Friar as I am—to pay an exorbitant and unjust tax; but the rudeness with which they treated me, was still more intolerable; and this is the reason why the Duke of Ferrara shall never see the works which I now exhibit to your Majesty." This spirit of independence was quite novel to Charles, who was continually surrounded by servile sycophants.

[1] Tassi, Vita di Fra D.

[2] The Pope and the Emperor assisted at Mass in the chapel of S. Thomas of Aquino, whose feast was solemnised on that day.

Nevertheless, he smiled, and told the lay-brother that he would interpose with the Duke of Ferrara, in order that every satisfaction should be given to him. The Emperor then left the cell, and told the Duke the reason of Fra Damiano's choler; whereon, the latter promised to indemnify him for any loss he might have suffered, and he, furthermore, guaranteed to exempt himself and his pupils from all taxation as often as they passed through his little principality. The Emperor, accompanied by the Duke, then re-entered Fra Damiano's cell, and the Friar, to convince them that his histories were composed of pieces of wood, and not painted with the pencil, took up a plane, and passed it vigorously over their surface, without doing the least injury to the colouring, which remained in all its integrity and beauty. He then presented the Emperor with a beautiful little history of the Crucifixion, and he gave another to the Duke of Ferrara, who ever afterwards set the highest value on it.[1]

From the convent of S. Domenico in Bologna, the monarch soon afterwards passed to that of S. Just, in Spain: and, it is only natural to suppose, that he often remembered his interview with the humble Fra Damiano!

But to continue the life of our artist. The Dominicans being now fully aware of his powers, of which they had convincing proof in the seven stalls he had just finished, commissioned him to execute the rest of the choir in like manner. Tassi barely alludes to this work, and suppresses the year in which it was begun, though he admits, (according to the counsel-book of said convent,) that at this period (1534) "an addition was made to the

[1] V. Giordani, Della venuta del Pont. Clem. VII. in Bologna; and also Melloni's Mem. degli Uomini Illustri in Santità, vol. ii.; Vita del B. Giacomo d'Ulma.

shrine of S. Dominic, together with a pulpit for the church."[1] This is all that he states; but as it has been our good fortune to light on the old books relating to this convent and church, we are enabled to speak of Fra Damiano's works with far greater accuracy.

This artist undertook three commissions simultaneously. An armory for the chapel of S. Domenico, wherein were to be placed the sacred utensils and vestments used at the Saint's altar—a pulpit for the church—and the completion of the works in the choir. These numerous undertakings required additional hands, and as early as 1529, we find a certain Zanetto da Bergamo assisting Fra Damiano. In 1530, one Francesco di' Lorenzo Zambelli was engaged for four years, with a salary "equivalent to that which he received three years ago, before he returned to Bergamo."[2] From this, we conclude, that Fra Damiano was in Bologna in 1527, and that he availed himself of the services of the said Zambelli. The Diary of the church furnishes us with another notice. It is an entry of six dollars given to this Zambelli—"Said sum being the property of Fra Damiano, (*his master*,) which he (Damiano) received from the *monks of San Giovanni, in Parma, for suggestions given by him regarding their choir*." Hence, it appears, that our lay-

[1] Tassi must have made a mistake in his transcript, for it was quite impossible to place a *ringhiera* (a pulpit or balcony usually placed in the facade of a building) on the Arca of S. Domenico, without destroying its unity. It is clear, therefore, that the addition must have been the armory or presses mentioned in the text.

[2] Tassi, loc. cit.

[3] In the Annali del Conv. di S. Dom. in Bolog. we read—"the first of these remained with Fra Dam. an entire year, and the second, four." We have elsewhere a permission for "a certain Bernardino, son of Master Menacordi, to remain with Fra Damiano for six years, in order to learn the art of Tarsia."

brother was invited to Parma, to give his opinion on a work of importance; and this is a clear proof of the esteem in which he was held throughout Italy. I have found no mention of Fra Antonio Asinelli, who, Masini says, assisted Fra Damiano at the works in the choir of S. Domenico as well as at the others in S. Michele, in Bosco; but we have a record of another very distinguished Dominican Intarsiator, a pupil of Fra Damiano, *and a disciple of Da Bergamo*. He executed the beautiful door that leads from the church into the sacristy; and we now happily possess the entries of all the sums laid out on the same. It was written by a certain Fra Lodovico, the Archist, or custodian of the shrine of S. Domenico. It begins on the 6th of June, 1532, and contains the various sums which were given to a painter for designs; and, amongst others, it makes distinct mention of an Annunciation. The door was perfected, and set up in its place, June 21, 1533. This door presents only two histories, with some perspectives, and it is so admirably finished, that it might be mistaken for Fra Damiano's workmanship. But as to the latter, he commenced the armories for the shrine of S. Domenico on the 12th of Decem., 1530. Fra Lodovico has carefully entered all the sums expended on it;[1] and we first find the amount given for the designs of the entire work. And in a marginal note, this Archist informs us that they were fur-

[1] The following is an entry extracted from the Archist's Book:—"This is the expenditure that I, Fra Lodovico, Archist, have made on the armory executed by Fra Damiano, the lay-brother, who has no compeer in this sort of work in our days. Cunningly enough has he continued to get large sums from me; never has he said to me that I should needs pay four lire, or one dollar, or forty Bolognini, (a small Bolognese coin,) or even half a dollar; but he was always wont to play on me after this fashion: '*Believe me, dear brother Lodovico, I want paper or some such thing;*' *and thus, with that dear tongue of his, he has got much money from me.*"

nished by Fra Leandro Alberti, the celebrated writer, who has eulogised the life and productions of Fra Damiano.[1] This armory was finished April 19, 1534, *i. e.* after three years and a half had been devoted to its completion, although its *length* is somewhat greater than that of the seven stalls which we have described. It was removed, I know not when, from the church to the sacristy; and it now serves as a wardrobe for preserving the vestments. There are four armories on the right and left, on each of which are eight histories; four on the upper part, and as many on the lower. These on the upper represent passages of the Old Testament; and these on the lower, some scenes in the life of S. Domenico. On the first we find this inscription :—"*The splendid work of Fra Dam. da Bergamo.*" And this truly is one of the most magnificent of our Intarsiator's productions; and in beauty of design, and exquisite finish, it is not inferior to the stalls which he executed in 1528.[2]

The armories had not yet been entirely completed, when the religious met (April 12, 1534) to deliberate on the works which were to be executed for perfecting the choir. At this meeting three questions were discussed:— 1st. Whether they should finish the new choir, for which, besides the seven stalls that are now in its upper part, two others had already been executed. 2nd. Whether Fra Damiano should retain, in his service, the

[1] Descriz. di tutta Italia. "Fra Damiano, of our Order, is the most distinguished Intarsiator that has existed at any time. He so joins together pieces of wood, that they look like a picture executed with the pencil, as may be seen in his own country, in S. Dominic's at Bologna, nay, and throughout Europe, wheresoever his works have been brought."

[2] The Archist concludes his journal thus:—"The seculars and the religious are angry on account of this armory; and let those who desire to know how it was executed, ask our Father Leandro, who laid out much money in procuring the designs for it."

young seculars who had been assisting him. 3rd. Whether it might not be better to dismiss them, and employ some lay-brothers of the convent, who would thus have an opportunity of learning the art, for the benefit of the Order. To the first question the Fathers unanimously answered that their poverty prevented them from undertaking any new works, or finishing these already commenced; and that Fra Damiano should stop with the armory, which was now all but perfected. To the second, they replied that, Zambelli should be dismissed when he had completed the term for which he had been engaged. To the third, they replied that, as they did not mean to commence any new work, it would be unwise to increase the number of the lay-brothers; but that Damiano, Zambelli, and the two lay-brothers who assisted them, should finish whatever remained to be done.[1]

This deliberation interrupted the works for fully seven years. Under date, 1535, we read that Fra Damiano was obliged to remove his workshop to another locality. In 1536, according to Tassi, he obtained from Paul III. a brief, dated September 8, (of same year,) confirming all the Indulgences which Clement VII., during his sojourn in Bologna, had granted to the chapel of S. Thomas of Aquino.[2]

Nevertheless, the Fathers did not persevere in their determination; for the Book of the Archist, (Lodovico,) informs us that in 1537, they charged our artist to

[1] These two lay-brothers must have been Fra Bernardino, of whom we have spoken, and a certain Fra Antonio da Lunigiana, who was a disciple of Fra Damiano.

[2] It is likely that Fra Damiano may have presented to Paul III. a little model of this chapel composed of *conjoined wood*, like that which he gave to Henry II. of France.

proceed with the pulpit, and to commence a door for the choir. Neither of these exists at present, nor do we know what became of them. The splendid works for the choir were not resumed till fully five years afterwards. But here let us speak of a small and exquisite work which our artist executed a few years before.

The Benedictine Monks of Perugia, having resolved to decorate their church with all the choicest productions of art, (and few in Italy have excelled them in this particular,) determined to employ the best carvers and intarsiators of their age, to execute their magnificent choir. It is thought that Raffaello furnished them with the designs; and of a certainty, I have never seen, nor do I hope to see, anything more exquisite. It is such a miracle of workmanship and art, that the Rev. Abate Bini, a religious of that distinguished monastery of S. Peter, is actually employed engraving and illustrating it.[1] We are told by Tassi and the Perugian writers, that the artificer of this splendid work was a certain Master Stefano da Bergamo; but they have not told us that this man was *Fra Damiano's brother*. Name, country, time, profession, (for Fra Damiano had a brother called Stefano, who was a carver,) all conspire to convince us of this fact. When Stefano heard that the Benedictines determined to have the door leading into the choir ornamented with tarsie, he tendered them the services of his brother, (the Dominican,) which were gladly accepted, as the Benedictines entrusted the entire work to him. He, therefore, executed two histories, together with two heads of Saints, on the two door-posts, *i. e.*, in the upper part, an Annunciation, and Pharaoh's daughter saving Moses from the waters of the Nile; and

[1] Since published by Puccinelli, Rome.

in the lower, the head of S. Peter, and that of S. Paul, which may be regarded as repetitions of these executed for the choir of S. Domenico at Bologna. This work, which was finished with consummate diligence, is now much injured. It has been said that Fra Damiano executed it in 1535, and that he received one hundred and twenty dollars for his labour.

But it is time to speak of our Intarsiator's grandest work, that is, the choir of S. Domenico in Bologna, to which he devoted the remainder of his life. Having premised some historical notices, we will proceed to describe it.

The cypher MXLI. (read MDXLI.) on the first stall clearly proves, that the choir was commenced in 1541. In a book of the sums expended on said church, under date, 1544, we find that Master Stefano da Bergamo, Fra Damiano's brother, was called to the assistance of the latter, by order of the Prior, Fra Stefano, of Bologna;[1] and that this Master Stefano had a pupil, named Zampiero da Padova. They were both lodged and dieted in the convent, and they divided between them a salary of six and a half gold crowns. The book states that they began to work, April 26, 1544, and that they continued here till the 24th of August, of the same year. On the 25th, they took their departure, having been, probably, invited elsewhere to attend to some work of urgency, as we find them back again, and resuming their employment on the 24th of September. We do not know how long Master

[1] From the book of expenditure in the church of S. Dom., in Bologna, ad ann. 1544. "I remember how Stefano da Bergamo, Fra Damiano's brother, agreed with me (Fra Stef. di Bologna) to work at our choir, together with his pupil, Zampiero di Padova, for six and a half gold crowns. They were to be lodged, etc., in the convent. They commenced April 26, 1544; they worked till the 24th of August, and went hence on the 25th."

Stefano continued to assist his brother. In the last payment made to Master Stefano, we discover that he demanded, in lieu of six and a half crowns, (the sum stipulated,) seven and a half, alleging that before coming to Bologna, Fra Damiano had written to him, stating that he should be entitled to so much. To put an end to the altercation, they gave what he demanded, and dismissed him. We do not know what portions of the work should be attributed to this distinguished artist; but we may reasonably ascribe to him the greater part of the traceries in the choir, and particularly the beautifully executed cornice, so admirable for its design, richness, and exquisite finish.[1] Meanwhile, the Dominican lay-brother, assisted, it is very likely, by his confreres, Bernardino, Antonio Asinelli, and Antonio da Lunigiana, prosecuted his resumed labours. On the nineteenth stall, he inscribed 1542; and, finally, on the great cornice over the last stall, on the right, he distinctly traced:—"1550, Fr. Damianus, Ord. Praedic. fecit."[2]

Having premised so much, we will now speak of the merit of the work. The actual choir of S. Domenico in Bologna, numbers 28 stalls on either side; and 28 inferior ones, making altogether 112, of which, however, only the upper part is *historied*. On these on the right, he depicted (*in tarsia*) the history of the New Testament;

[1] Amid other beauties in this cornice, nothing can exceed the gracefulness of the letters forming the Latin inscription. They are each about a cubit in length, and present various groups of angels admirably finished.

[2] This inscription must have been placed here at a somewhat later period, as Fra Damiano died in that year. Tassi says that he found the following notice in the archives of S. Domenico, Bologna:—"A. D., 1500 was completed the wonderful choir of our church. It was perfected in the style vulgarly called *tarsia*, by Fra Damiano of Bergamo, the lay-brother, a member of our monastery, who executed *the presbytery*, the pulpit, and the armory for the Ark."

and on those at the left, that of the Old. In the latter he represented the Creation of the World—Adam and Eve expelled from Paradise—the Death of Abel—the Deluge—the Sacrifice of Melchisedech—Abraham in the Act of adoring the three Angels—the Sacrifice of Isaac—the Betrayal of Joseph—the Triumph of the same—the Burning Bush—Moses admonishing Pharaoh to allow the Hebrews to Depart—the Eating of the Paschal Lamb—the Passage of the Red Sea—the Shower of Manna—Moses striking the Rock—the same Praying on the Mountain—the same Receiving the Law on Sinai—the Ark and Rod of Aaron—the Brazen Serpent in the desert—Sampson casting down the Temple of the Philistines—David slaying Goliah—the Defeat of the Philistines—David dancing before the Ark—Queen Sheba before Solomon—Job—Tobias curing his Father's blindness—Judith slaying Olofernes—and, finally, the History of the Three Children in the Babylonian furnace, as described by Daniel. They make, altogether, 28.

This first arm of the Dominican choir, in execution as well as in design, is far inferior to the seven panels in front, and to the opposite side also, as the nude is but very feebly outlined; the draping harsh and dry; the extremities poorly defined; whilst the landscapes and edifices are far from the perfection of the other works by Fra Damiano. I believe that if this part of it be contemporary with the opposite (which I doubt) Fra Damiano must have only superintended the workmanship, or executed but a fragment of it. To corroborate this, I will state that we find his name and the year of the work everywhere on the front stalls and on the opposite side to them, whereas neither the one nor the other is to be seen on the stalls at the left. We may naturally conjecture then, that this renowned intarsiator

executed only the right side; and that at a later period, when the choir was removed to its actual position, and when the friars found the old stalls to be insufficient for its vast length, some unknown hand, mayhap a disciple of Fra Damiano,[1] was employed to execute a corresponding number. Nothing can be more marked than the contrast between the two arms of the choir, nor do we require much skill to recognise the diversity of hands that performed the work.

The right arm, which is certainly Fra Damiano's work, presents the following histories:—the Annunciation—the Visitation of S. Elizabeth—the Nativity of J. C.—the Presentation in the Temple—the Adoration of the Magi—the Purification—the Slaughter of the Innocents—Our Lord disputing with the Doctors—the Baptism of J. C.—the Temptation in the Wilderness—the Transfiguration—J. C. healing the Infirm—the Multiplication of the Bread—the Resurrection of Lazarus—Christ's Triumphant entry into Jerusalem—the Expulsion of the Profaners from the Temple—the Last Supper—Christ Washing the feet of the Apostles—Christ Praying in the Garden—the Flagellation—the Crowning with Thorns—the Crucifixion—the Descent into Limbus—the Resurrection—the Ascension—and the Descent of the Holy Ghost in the supper-room.

Not to dwell too long on the varied beauties that adorn the right side of the Bolognese choir, we will

[1] My conjecture is strengthened by the following particulars, which I have found in the old book of the counsels of the convent. A. D. 1603, we read:—"Fra Giusep. Pasqualini, a lay-brother, was invested, etc. . . . . and he collected the alms which were employed to perfect the choir, then only half finished." We read in another place of the permission given to a Bolognese noblemen to build a chapel *pro choro transferendo;* and in 1621, we find another deliberation concerning the completion of the choir, '*long since begun, and not yet perfected.*'"

content ourselves with remarking, that in correctness of design, richness, and diversity of composition, delicacy of carving, and finished execution, it is nowise inferior to the first stalls which he elaborated between 1528, and 1530.

As regards the buildings represented in these histories, we would say, that they were designed by some able architect; and we have already observed that the celebrated Barozio da Vignola had been employed for this purpose. Some famous painter, doubtless, designed the figures, in which the nude is most correctly outlined, to say nothing of the beauty of the grouping and draping. Truly wonderful is a landscape in the scene representing the Baptism of Jesus Christ; for it may be regarded as a perfect triumph over the difficulties presented to the artist, by the material on which he had to work In fact, it looks like the production of a pencil, so delicate and soft is its shading. The Last Supper reminds us of Lionardo's great work in the refectory of the Grazie at Milan. To counterfeit various precious marbles, he availed himself of the roots of trees which resemble the veins and colours on *the stone*. But the eye can no longer contemplate the varied tintings which he imparted to his little pictures, since time has almost cancelled them entirely. As, however, some traces of the colouring still appear on the first seven upper panellings, I doubt much whether the remainder were similarly tinted, or merely shaded in chiaroscuro. On the authority of Alberti, who lauds the beauty and variety of the colouring of these *tarsie*, we must believe that the action of the sun has seriously injured the tinting. Happily, however, the part which we think is the work of Fra Damiano has been admirably preserved. Neither time, nor

man, nor moth has dared to damage this glorious production; but we cannot say this of the left side, which has suffered much, not from moths, but from the destructive hand of man. Some savage, in human form, has pared off a considerable portion of the figures and *conjoined pieces of wood*, substituting in their place bits of lead to represent the helmets, shields, cuirasses, and swords of the soldiers, the very sight of which is enough to make the blood boil in one's veins.[1] This is all that we have been able to collect regarding the life and works of this most distinguished Intarsiator. According to Leandro Alberti, he died on the 30th of August, 1549, having almost finished the choir of S. Domenico, "*which is the most admirable work of its sort in the world.*"[2] To the splendid encomiums bestowed on him by Vasari and Alberti, we will add that of Mons. Sabba da Castiglione, who, (in his Memoranda) describing the ornamentation of a private domicile, speaks of him thus:—

"It was decorated with works in *tarsia*, by Fra Giovanni da Monte Oliveto, or, mayhap, by Fra Raffaello da Brescia, (who was also of the same convent,) or by the Legnaghi, who were famous in this branch, particularly for their perspectives. But far excelling all these, are the works executed by Fra Damiano da Bergamo, and I would regard them, not as human, but as *divine*. Albeit, the others whom we have named, were excellent masters, this Dominican lay-brother surpasses them all, not only in perspective, but in landsape, buildings, etc.; and what is more, in the figures. In fact, wood was to him what the pencil was to the great Apelles; nay, it appears to me, that the colouring of these pieces is more life-like,

[1] The great lettern in the centre of the choir is thought to have been the work of Fra Damiano.

[2] Loc. cit.

and more beautiful, than that which is employed by painters, so much so, that these exquisite productions may be termed a new style of *picture, excellently coloured without colours*. Another characteristic of them, and one which nowise diminishes our admiration, is, that the eye cannot trace the *conjoining* of *the pieces*, no matter how closely it may scrutinise them. This good Friar, in my opinion, is the greatest man of his age, in all that concerns wood-staining, no matter what the colour may be; and, also, in imitating every species of marble and other stone: nay, I hold, that in future times, he shall have no equal. I would fain hope that the Lord God will give him grace to finish the choir of S. Domenico in Bologna. I am sure that it will be the eighth wonder of the world; and, as the Babylonians, Assyrians, Egyptians, and Greeks, boasted of their temples, pyramids, colossi, and sepulchres, so shall Bologna the learned, glory in the choir of S. Domenico; but as I do not wish to appear a flatterer of my excellent friend, I will here state briefly, that all I could say in praise of his rare and singular ability, nay, and of his holy life, must fall far short of the reality."[1] With this eulogy, we will close the memoir of Fra Damiano, and proceed to speak of the religious to whom he taught the art of carving and tarsia.

We read, that he taught these arts to three Dominican lay-brothers, of whom we have already spoken. These were Fra Bernardino, Fra Antonio Asinelli, and Fra Antonio da Lunigiana. Of the two first, we have recorded all that we could collect. Father Serafino Razzi, however, has given us some particulars relating to

[1] See Tassi's Vita di Fra Damiano; and also Cicognara, vol. v., l. v., p. 524.

the third. He speaks of him, in his catalogue of the Dominican artists, in the following terms:—"Fra Antonio di Lunigiana, a lay-brother of S. Romano di Lucca, and disciple, as is believed, of the said Fra Damiano, has executed, in his convent of Lucca, some excellent pictures (in tarsia), which may be seen on the doors of the sacristy, on the lecterns, and on the organ. He also produced other works of this sort, in the library of the convent of the Madonna della Quercia, which is not far from Viterbo. He died in this convent a few years ago, aged about eighty."[1] Of the works of this Fra Antonio none but the following exist:—the doors of the sacristy, which, as well as these of the conventual church of S. Romano di Lucca, are decorated with *tarsia-work*. They all, however, have been so much injured, that only a miserable remnant of them survives. On the doors of the sacristy, he executed two histories from the life of Sampson. In these he represented the strong man carrying off the gates of Gaza, and slaying the lion. On the doors leading into the church, he gives us two histories of the B. V. M., which, though they possess some merit in finish, are certainly inferior to these by Fra Damiano. He also decorated the lectern of the choir with some perspectives, and two most beautiful heads of SS. Peter and Paul, which look like repetitions of these executed by his master, for the choir of S. Domenico in Bologna, and that of S. Pietro in Perugia. The decorations of the organ of the same church, and these in the library della Quercia, mentioned by Razzi, no longer exist; but there are some of his tarsie still in the *presbytery* of S. Maria del Sasso, near Bibbiena. These have been recorded by Father Fineschi, though Razzi has said nothing of them.[2] I can say nothing of them, as they have not been well

[1] Istor. degli Uom. Illustri. [2] Compendio Storico-critico, p. 46.

described by the former writer. Moreover, many years have passed since I saw them. We may suppose that this artist died about 1584 or 1585, as Razzi's work was written about the year 1587, as he himself tells us, at page 382.

If some should pronounce these notices of the Dominican carvers and intarsiators to be jejune, we can only repeat what we have stated before, that the duties of the cloister, infirm health, and other circumstances, have not permitted us to extend our researches. We are fully aware that many distinguished cultivators of these two arts, have flourished in many regions of Italy;[1] and we have been assured that the Venetian dominions possess many exquisite works by a Dominican Intarsiator; but all our importunities to obtain information on the subject, have utterly failed. Let this be our apology. Enough, however, has been said to prove that Fra Damiano da Bergamo alone maintained the primacy of the Dominicans in carving, as well as in tarsia.

CHAPTER XIV.

Of some minor Artists of the Sixteenth Century.

We have determined to treat, in a single chapter, of some artists, of various regions of Italy, concerning whom we have been able to collect only fragmentary notices.—Fragmentary, however, though they be, and unimportant,

[1] For example, the choir of S. Domenico (Major) of Naples, was executed (in nut wood) A. D. 1562, by Giuseppe di Pareta, a lay-brother of that convent. The work cost 866 ducats.—V. Descriz. Istor. di Dom. Magg. di Napoli del P. Perrotta.

perhaps, to the general history of Italian Arts, they will go to prove how zealously the Dominicans devoted themselves to the cultivation of the same in all their convents.

The first of whom I will speak is Fra Bartolommeo Coda da Rimini. This religious was not unknown to Vasari and Lanzi, as the former, in his Life of Giovanni Bellini, informs us that Benedetto Coda of Ferrara, was among the disciples of Giovanni, although he did not profit thereby. "This artist," continues the Aretine, "dwelt in Rimini, where he painted many pictures, and he left behind him a son, called Bartolommeo, who pursued the same vocation." Lanzi, who mentions him in the first epoch of the Bolognese School, corrects the assertion of Vasari, namely—*that he did not profit by Bellini's teaching*, adducing as a proof, the very contrary, the painting in the cathedral of Rimini, representing the Espousals of the Virgin, which he pronounces to be mediocre; and also, that in the Dominican church of the Rosary, in the same city, which he says exhibits better taste, albeit—not *modern*. He adds, however, that he cannot say so much in praise of Bartolommeo's son, "one of whose pictures I saw at S. Rocco da Pesaro, painted in 1528, with such excellent method, as almost to remind us of the golden age. It represents the Titular Saint of the church, along with S. Sebastiano, standing at the throne of the Virgin, with the addition of beautiful and playful Cherubs."[1] It is very probable that Benedetto

[1] Loc. cit. Gio. Andrea Lazzarini, Catalogo delle Pitture di Pesaro. Pesaro, 1783, p. 14. Confraternita di S. Rocco. "The grand altar possesses a noble painting on panel. On the pedestal on which the Virgin is seated, in presence of SS. Seb. and Rocco, we read—'Bartholomeus . . . . . nsis, 1528.' This must be the name of the painter. Amici Ricci states, that this painting was sold and substituted by an Annunciation

Coda, himself, taught his son the rudiments of the art; and Ricci conjectures that he subsequently sent him to perfect himself at Bologna, in the school of Ramenghi, who was the first to propagate the new style. It is likely that a Master Francesco di M. Sebastiano, the nephew of Fra Bartolommeo, whom his uncle subsequently took to assist him, (just as Della Porta employed Albertinelli,) also studied in this school. In 1562, we find them both painting in Sanseverino, a city in the Marches of Ancona, Ricci has published an important document relating to these painters, which he discovered in the archives of that city. It tells us that Fra Bartolommeo, and Master Francesco, bound themselves (on the 4th of Novem. of the same year) to paint a picture for the chapel of the Saraceni Family, in the church of S. Domenico di Mercato, according to the sketch designed by Fra Bartolommeo, for which work the Saraceni Family agreed to give the artists panel, canvas, etc.: and, also, the sum of eighty florins.[1] This agreement was attested by Lorenzo Noe, the notary, in the cell of the Prior of S. Domenico. The subject which they were employed to paint, was a Pietà. Not having seen this painting, we will speak of it in the words of Giuseppe Ranaldi, who has favoured me with the following description:—

"This painting is five palms and four ounces (Roman measurement) high, by two palms, and ten ounces wide. It represents Our Lady seated on an embasement, adorned with a semicircular postergal. She is in the act of supporting her Dead Son, whom the painter exhibits reclining on her bosom. Her right hand supports His head, and her left, one of His arms, whilst

om the pencil of Carlo Paolucci.—V. Mem. degli artisti della Marca di ncona, v. 2, c. xv., note 45.

[1] Ricci, loc. cit.

the other is rigidly extended along His side. The Virgin manifests all the intensity of grief so well befitting this most dolorous scene. Her fair hair falling loosely over her shoulders, deepens the agonizing sorrow depicted on her features. She is draped in a robe approaching azure; a grey mantle covers her head and bosom, and nothing can be more beautiful than its graceful folds.[1] The upright position of the dead Saviour, who seems to sustain himself by His own strength, does not appear to be reasonable; and, of a truth, the painter who represented Him thus, did not conceive the proper notion of the Word made Flesh, who died and triumphed over death. There is no blood on His sacred body, save some drops that trickle from the crown of thorns, and that which oozes from the wound in His side. In this painting Coda has proved himself to be conversant with the manner of treating lights and shadows, as well as the carnations. The latter are far from being harsh or dry; particularly in the features of the Virgin." Ricci thinks that this work deserves all the encomiums that Lanzi bestowed on the Pesarese picture.

This painting having been finished to the satisfaction of the Saraceni family, they paid our artist the eighty florins for which they stipulated, and the receipt was registered by the foresaid Lorenzo Noe, July 1st, 1563, that is to say, after the expiration of about seven months.

[1] This painting has been removed from the church to the convent.

[2] Ricci. loc. cit. Ranaldi has found the following notice relating to the picture in the archives of the Dominicans of S. Maria di Mercato. "A. 1562, Giacomo Saraceni, and Ciuccione della Pialfa, agreed with Fra Bartolommeo, and Master Francesco, painters, of Rimini, to execute their altar-piece in panel, for the sum of eighty florins. This work was finished, and said for, by the said Saraceni, July 1, 1563." Mem. Stor. di S. M. d

Ricci observes, moreover, that the archives of the Dominicans in Sanseverino, clearly prove these painters to have belonged to the Order of Preaching-friars, and that they were for a long time domiciled in that city.[1] Moreover, various biographers admit that they spent a considerable portion of their life in other districts. I must advert, however, that the designation "Master Francesco, son of Master Sebastiano," (the nephew of Fra Bartolommeo Coda) is not such as would have been given to a religious.

We, for a long time flattered ourselves with the hope of being able to derive some valuable information concerning this excellent painter, from the life which Baruffaldi has written of him, and which is unedited, together with the Memoirs of other Ferrarese artists, in the Ercolani library at Bologna; but a friend who undertook to make the researches for me, has not succeeded as he could have desired. Father Serafino Razzi records another Dominican painter whom he may have known personally. This was Fra Onorio Peruzzi, son of Baldassare Peruzzi of Siena, a most excellent architect, painter of grotesques, and also a good frescoist and historical painter. We cannot say where our artist was born, as his father was perpetually moving about from place to place, till he closed his days in Rome, where he died, A. D. 1536, aged fifty-five years. Onorio, however, was not the last of Baldassare's sons. The father was buried in the Pantheon, near Raffaello's sepulchre; and the inscription on his tomb mentions Onorio amongst his younger children. His parent taught him the rudiments of his art; and

Glorioso. The same asserts that Master Francesco da Rimini, was in Sanseverino till 1576, as appears by a document bearing his signature in that year.

[1] Ricci. loc. cit.

wishing, no doubt, to follow it professionally, he applied himself to study under some of the many disciples of Raffaello. He took the Dominican habit in the convent of the Minerva (Rome) in the year 1556; when he had attained his thirtieth year, and completed his artistic studies. At this period, instead of following the example of Fra Giovanni Angelico, or Fra Bartolommeo, he made up his mind to renounce the pencil. Nevertheless, having been invited to the convent of S. Romano in Lucca the Superior prayed him to paint the panels of the organ of their church, and he could not decline such a request. "He there executed a beautiful perspective in chiaroscuro, and he painted various beautiful children harmonizing some pieces of vocal music. Nothing can be more excellent than this composition, which is particularly remarkable for the beautiful attitudes in which he has depicted these little nude melodists.[1]" After this he was frequently urged to resume his pictorial studies, but all to no purpose, as nothing could induce him to relinquish his resolution. A few years afterwards he ended his days most devoutly in Rome.

We are indebted to Camillo Ramelli da Fabriano for the discovery of another Dominican painter, of whom he writes to Giuseppe Ranaldi, librarian of S. Severino, in the following terms:—"In the parochial church of Cancelli, on the Fabriano estate, there is over the altar on the left of the grand altar a painting in panel. It

[1] Storia degli Uom. Illustri. These panels do not exist. The same writer mentions a certain Fra Reginaldo, a native of Perugia, whose father was a German. He, it appears, made wonderful progress in painting; but he died of the plague, in 1510. The Chronicles of S. M. Novella, praise, among others, a certain Fra Mattia, of Florence, who died in 1527, and Fra Salvatore da Arezzo, who deceased in 1535. We do not possess any remains of them.—V. Borghigiani, Cron. Annal.

represents the B. V. M. robed in a garment, which is ornamented with flowers. Over her are two cherubims and two angels in the act of placing a flower-woven crown on her head. On the left of the spectator is S. Paul, and lower down S. Dominic, at whose feet is an open volume, whereon we read—"*Opus fac Evangelistæ; ministerium imple; sobrius esto; qui autem fecerit, et docuerit sic homines*," *etc.* Still lower down is S. Gismondo, at whose feet there is also an open book. This, however, appears to have been added subsequently by another hand, as the characters traced on the sides of the picture clearly indicate a different stylus. "*Sancto Gismundo, A. D. CICI GIII.*" (sic) are the words on the left side; and these on the right are the following:—"*Rev. Domin. Sigismundus Orlandus de Fabriano dotavit hanc capellam juris patronatus totius suæ domus, et familiæ, et ommium descendentium ex suis germanis fratribus.*" On the right of the principal figures is S. Catherine, M., and lower down S. Catherine of Siena; and in the centre, under the Virgin, is a very fanciful ornamentation of three arches, from two of which springs a rose, having this legend under it :—

"Salve verbi sacra parens,
Salve Rosa spina carens."[1]

Then follows an armorial device—a hand grasping a sword, the point of which pierces a star. The heads are very beautiful, especially that of S. Dominic and S. Gismundo; but the fifteen little paintings which form the cornice of the picture, and represent the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary, are evidently by another hand, perhaps by the artist who added the book and the date.

[1] "Hail thou of whom the Word was born,
Hail thou Rose without a thorn!"

1603. At the feet of the Virgin there is a scroll with this inscription:—

"Frat. Fabian. Urbinas.
Ord. Prædicator.
Pingebat. 1553."

This painter has been hitherto unknown to the history of the Order, as well as to that of Art. I think it likely, considering his age and country, that he may have been a disciple of Fra Carnevale da Urbino, whose life we have given in the second book of the first volume of these Memoirs.[1] A comparison of the style of the two might easily resolve our conjecture; but if any one will say that these two painters should not have a place in a work treating of the most *eminent* of our artists, I will remind him, that even distinguished painters, after expending all their powers on the lights and shadows of the principal objects, do not think it unworthy of them to introduce minor subjects, and various accessories which serve to heighten the effect of the former, till the whole work becomes a harmonious ensemble of diversified beauties. For this reason, we have given the first place to Fra Bartolommeo della Porta, and, indeed, his transcendent merits entitle him to it. The minor artists, therefore, may be regarded as minor planets revolving round him and deriving all their splendour from this grand luminary.

[1] A manuscript written by Father Isidoro Ugurgieri, and now in the possession of Onorato Porri, the publisher, of Siena, mentions, amongst other celebrities, the following Dominican artists:—

1. Fra Sebastiano Caccini, who flourished in 1637. His manner is described as good, and he is said to have painted many pictures.

2. Fra Serafino da Lucca, a lay-brother of this convent, (S. Domenico) who was a distinguished painter and sculptor, who also made excellent models in clay. He deceased, August 4, 1595.

3. Fra Alberto Transerighi, a master in Theology. He was also an excellent painter and sculptor; and singularly remarkable for his miniatures in wax and *paper*.

CHAPTER XV.

Sister Plautilla Nelli, the Dominican Paintress, and other Nuns of the same Institute, who cultivated Painting, Miniature, and the Plastic Art in Florence, Prato, and Lucca.

> "Women have risen to high excellence
> In every art whereto they give their care."—
> ORLANDO FURIOSO, Cant. XX.

IN the second decade of the sixteenth century, Bologna "the learned," was justly proud of a young and beautiful girl, who devoted herself to Art; and in that age of such celebrities as Buonarroti and Lombardi, won fame for herself as a sculptress. This girl was Madonna Properzia de' Rossi. Unrequited love is said to have furnished themes for her chisel, and to have consigned her to an early grave. In this respect, she was like the Lesbian Sapho, that weak and erring daughter of the Muses. But as poesy failed to enamour the Greek maiden of existence, so neither could Properzia's eclat, as a sculptress, propitiate inflexible destiny, and they both descended to the sepulchre regretted and lamented in the April of their years. A short time before Properzia's decease, there dwelt in Florence a young girl of noble family, who applied herself to the study of painting, and ultimately acquired as much celebrity by her pencil, as did the Bolognese by her chisel. Unlike the latter, however, she did not set her heart on perishable earthly beauty, but on the celestial and immortal. Need we say,

that her career and termination bore no resemblance to that of the hapless Properzia? This young noble lady was Sister Plautilla Nelli, the Dominican paintress.

Sister Plautilla was the daughter of Lucca Nelli, a Florentine patrician, and was born in the year 1523. The name of her mother has not been transmitted to us, but we find that she had a sister called Petronilla, who followed her into the cloister, probably about 1538 or 1540. At the beginning of the century, the piety of the noble lady, Donna Cammilla Ruccellai, had completed the building of the monastery of S. Catherine, in the Via Larga, in Florence, and its foundress, at the instance of Fra Gerolamo Savonarola, had determined to make its inmates cultivate the art of painting and miniaturing. Flying from the evanescent pleasures of the world, these two sisters betook themselves to this sacred retreat, with hearts that yearned for the pure and holy joys of heaven. Gifted with genius, and well educated minds, they devoted themselves to the cultivation of arts, which were so well suited to their sex and calling. Petronilla, who was given to literature, wrote a life of Savonarola, who had been mainly instrumental in founding the monastery; and it was from this life, which is still in manuscript, that Father Serafino Razzi collected materials for one somewhat similar.[1] Plautilla commenced by drawing and

[1] Sister Plautilla's MS. is now in the possession of Pietro Bigazzi of Florence, who kindly permitted me to examine it. Instead of an original life of Savonarola, it seems to be, in great part, a copy of that written by Burlamacchi, and published in Lucca in 1764. Petronilla has added all the traditions and narratives concerning Fra Geralmo, that she was able to collect. Along with Burlamacchi's narrative, she has given us some addenda by two or three other writers, some of whom have not concealed their names, and also some facts that were brought to light after Burlamacchi's death. At the end of the MS. she wrote—"Here terminates the life of the BLESSED GEROLAMO and his companions, written by me, Sister

imitating the pictures of the celebrated masters, and so admirably did she succeed, that in a very short time she produced some works that astonished even professional artists. Razzi, who was acquainted with her, says that she taught herself;[1] and Vasari, who wrote his lives while she was living, mentions her in his second edition. After lauding the excellence of her drawing, he contrasts her with Properzia de' Rossi. Let us hear him:—"But," quoth he, "there have not wanted women who have equalled Properzia in design, although she drew very well; and have performed works in painting quite as meritorious as those executed by her in sculpture. Among the first, is to be considered the Sister Plautilla Nelli," etc.[2] From these words I would conclude, that we may be permitted to doubt Razzi's assertion, as Plautilla never could have learned to draw correctly without the instructions of an excellent master. Fra Paolino di Pistoja had dwelt a considerable time in the neighbouring convent of S. Marco, and he, as we have already said, inherited the style and designs of Fra Bartolommeo della Porta. Need we say, that he enriched Florence, and his natal place, with many rare productions of his

Petronilla, a sinner: devout readers, pray for me." Under these, we find the following words:—"This book belongs to the monastery of S. Catherine of Siena, in Florence, and is in the possession of Sister Plautilla Nelli, a nun of the said monastery, and sister of the foresaid Petronilla. She prays all persons, into whose hands this book may come, to be careful of it, and to return it to her, both on account of its valuable contents and the memory of her sister who has passed to the better life." Elsewhere, "may God give glory to these two sisters, Sister Plautilla Nelli, the paintress and prioress, and to Petronilla, who wrote this history. F. S. R. (Father Serafino Razzi, Ord. Præd compiled an abbreviated memoir (and a better one) out of this book, A.D. 1590. The Canon Morenei mentions Petronilla's MS. in the Bibliografia Storico-ragionata della Toscana, vol. 2.

[1] Istoria degli Uomini Illustri Domenicani.

[2] Life of P. de' Rossi.—V. Bohn's series.

pencil? He then, probably, directed the studies of this Sister, and furnished her with his own designs and these of Fra Bartolommeo, all of which he bequeathed to her (according to Vasari) at his death, which occurred in 1547. More than once, I have recognised some resemblance between Nelli and Signoracci, as well in outline as in colouring, albeit, the Pistojese is, in every respect, superior to the Florentine paintress.

The severe rule of monastic seclusion presented a great difficulty to this sister's proficiency in art. In fact, she could not have studied the *true*, or in other words, she had no opportunity of seeing the expression of the various passions, whether of anger, love, or hatred, on the human countenance; and, consequently, could not develope them in her productions with that force, truthfulness, and power, which constitute the chiefest merits of painting. Cloistered within inaccessible precincts; surrounded by faces which mirrored only serenity and calm; perpetually in the society of women, whose uniformity of discipline, nay, and of habiliment, gave a monotonous character to their every movement, she could not have learned to pourtray these great passions in which the hand and fantasy of the painter may be said to triumph. The same difficulties, or perhaps still greater, were to be encountered by her in design and colouring, as she had no means of studying—I will not say the nude—but the ancient statues, and the paintings by celebrated masters. She had no opportunity of witnessing the variations of lights and shadows in the beauteous landscape at sun-rise or sun-set, when every object is bathed in these radiant tints so charming to the painter's eye; nor could she watch the sombre shadows deepening gradually into darkest night; or, the moon rending the bosom of the clouds, and shedding her pale, silvery lustre on the

universe. Need we say that she could not treasure up all the knowledge derivable from books, long journeys, and conversations with the cognoscenti—all of which are absolutely necessary for those who would become eminent in art? Hence, it was, that Sister Plautilla could apply herself only to these easy and simple compositions which did not require much skill in art, such as Holy Families, half figures of Saints, portraits, etc. Withal, this nun boldly undertook some grand and copious compositions, which required study, genius, and great artistic power—hence, almost all her paintings are on a large superficies, which is covered with a multitude of figures. In the refectory of S. M. Novella, there is a large picture on canvas, which Sister Plautilla coloured for the refectory of S. Catherine in the Via Larga. In this she represented Jesus Christ, with the Apostles, seated at the table of the Last Supper; and all the figures are life size. The disposition of the figures is mediocre—indeed, the treatment of the subject reminds us of Fra Bartolommeo's enlarged style: but there is, at the same time, a harshness in the outlines, which belongs neither to Porta nor to Signoracci. The fleshes have evidently suffered from retouching, and the expression of the features is monotonous and insignificant. We are told that for her male figures, (as she could not have the natural model,) she was wont to copy some of the nuns, and to paint them with long moustachies, and flowing beards. This attempt to represent the virile, did not succeed, as the regular lineaments, and unimpassioned features, clearly revealed not only the woman, but the nun also. Amongst her best works is a Deposition from the Cross, which is now in the Florentine Academy. Lanzi, speaking of this work, thinks that it was *invented* by Andrea del Sarto, and executed by Sister Plautilla.

Its conception somewhat resembles the Deposition by Vannucchi, now in the Pitti Gallery. In this, also, the figures are life size. It represents the Redeemer dead, and laid on a white sheet. St. John, kneeling, supports His shoulders, and at His feet is Mary Magdalene. The nude of the Saviour, although pretty correctly designed, is not equally well painted. The limbs, moreover, are not well studied, and a single glance proves that the artiste lacked knowledge of the nude. Along with other figures, are these of the three Maries, and three Apostles, evincing the most profound grief The ground of the picture is a Peruginesque landscape, with a view of Mount Cavalry. This work exhibits some traces of Fra Bartolommeo's manner, blended with that of Andrea del Sarto; the heads, too, are sufficiently expressive, but too feminine. I do not hesitate to pronounce it the best of this nun's paintings. It is told that Sister Plautilla, when studying the nude of the Redeemer, took for her model, a deceased nun, and that the other nuns, bantering her on this, were wont to say, that she did not paint *Cristi* but *Criste.*

Another composition, which presented all the difficulties we have mentioned, was the Adoration of the Magi. This, however, she painted so admirably, as to merit for it the eulogies of Vasari; nay, and of Lanzi, who says that this painting was "all her own invention, and with landscape, which would have done honour to a modern."[1] At present we know not what has befallen the original. Some have thought it to be the same Adoration that is now in the gallery of the Uffizj; but such is not the fact.

[1] History of Painting. Flor. School, 2nd Epoch. The same authority states that the noble family of Nelli in Florence possesses a Crucifixion, with many excellent figures, by Sister Plautilla. At present there is no clue to this work.

Inferior to her other works, was a Descent of the Holy Ghost, which she was commissioned to paint for a citizen of Perugia, according to Serafino Piepi, about 1554. It is still in the church of S. Dominic, in that city, over the altar which is under the organ. It is now quite blackened, either by the action of the sun, or the peculiarity of the colours. At all events, the mezzotints have entirely disappeared. Here we perceive the same languidness of design, crudeness of lines, and monotony of features. The composition seems to have been taken from a very indifferent engraving on copper. As to the other paintings which I have had no opportunity of seeing, Vasari himself shall describe them.

"In the convent of S. Lucia at Pistoja, there is a large picture by Sister Plautilla in the choir. It represents the Madonna holding the Divine Child in her arms, with S. Tomaso, S. Agostino, S. M. Maddalena, S. Catherine of Siena, S. Agnese, S. Catherine the Martyr, and Santa Lucia. Another picture by the same hand was sent abroad by the director of the hospital of Lelmo. In the refectory of the above-named convent of S. Caterina in Florence, there is a picture of the Last Supper by Sister Plautilla; and, indeed, there are so many pictures dispersed about the houses of the Florentine gentry, that it would take me too long if I were to enumerate them all. The wife of the Signore Mandragone, a Spaniard by birth, has in her possession an Annunciation by the Sister Plautilla; and Madonna Marietta de Fedini has one of a similar kind. There is a small picture by this paintress in the church of Santa Maria del Fiore; with the predella of an altar likewise by her hand. On the latter are depicted events from the life of S. Zanobi, which are extremely beautiful delineations. But this

venerable and well-endowed Sister, before she had begun to execute works of importance, had occupied herself with miniature painting. In this department of art, therefore, many very beautiful little pictures, by her hand, may still be seen in the possession of different persons; but of these it is not needful that I should make further mention. The best of Sister Plautilla's works are, without doubt, those that she has copied from others, but from these it is manifest that she would have effected admirable things, if she had been able to study, as *men do, from the life*, and had been furnished with the advantages of various kinds, which the student in design acquires in drawing from *nature*. The truth of this observation may be perceived clearly from a picture of the Nativity of Christ, copied by Sister Plautilla, from one which was painted by Bronzino, for Filippo Salviati, and is furthermore made manifest by the fact, that the figures and faces of women, whom she could study at her pleasure, are much more satisfactorily rendered in her works, than are those of men, and have a much closer resemblance to the truth of nature. In some of her pictures this artiste has given the portrait of Madonna Costanza de' Doni, in her female heads; this lady is considered one of the brightest examples of beauty and excellence that our times have produced; and her likeness has been thus depicted by Sister Plautilla, in such a manner, that for a woman who, for the causes above-mentioned, could not acquire any great extent of practice, nothing better could be desired."[1]

This Dominican paintress was remarkable for her prudence and piety, and was frequently elected superioress of her monastery. She died in 1587, according to Razzi,

[1] See Vasari's Life of Properzia de' Rossi, trans. by Mrs. Foster.

and not, as Richa says, in the year following.[1] She educated some pupils of her convent in the pictorial art, and among them were Sister Prudenza Cambi, Sister Agatha Traballesi, Sister Maria Ruggieri, and a Sister Veronica.—"All of whom," writes Father Razzi, "live in the same monastery, *and laudably employ themselves with painting on canvas and on panel.*"[2] To these Richa adds two Nuns, who were famous as miniaturists, that is to say, Sister Felice Lupicini, and Sister Angiola Minerbetti.

These pupils of Nelli were not the only nuns who cultivated design in this monastery. There were others too, who, instead of painting, devoted themselves to modelling in clay. The aforesaid Father Razzi records some sisters of the same convent. (S. Catherine's,) who cultivated this art, and won great praise:—"Sister Dionisia Niccolini," quoth he, "produced some devout figures in relievo, one of which, a Madonna, with the Infant in her arms, I have recently seen, at Florence, in the house of Madonna Laura da Gagliano. Sister Angelica Razzi, (the sister of the writer of this chronicle,) also executed similar figures in clay—*i. e.*, Madonnas, angels, and saints. Particularly worthy of mention is a Madonna that she executed in Perugia, for the chapel of the Madonna (del Rosario). This figure represents the Virgin holding the sleeping Infant on her bosom. This she copied from a similar one, which, a century ago, was carried processionally, with great veneration, in Florence. She modelled another like this for the church of S. Marco. She is alive at present, A.D. 1587. In the monastery of

[1] Razzi, Stor. degli Illustri dell' Ord. de' Pred. Monache Pittrici. Richa otiz. delle chiese Fior. Father Biliotti says she died, aged 65, having spent 52 years in the cloister.

[2] Razzi, loc. cit.

S. Vincenzo, at Prato, there are many nuns who devote themselves to painting. Certain angels executed by them, are to be found everywhere through Italy, and they are much *venerated*, *because they have been produced in this monastery*, where there are, at present, 150 noble servants of God, governed by the prioress, Sister Catherine de' Ricci, a Florentine lady, distinguished for her extraordinary piety."[1]

Nor should we forget to mention that many Nuns of the convent of S. Domenico in Lucca, applied themselves zealously to the study of painting and modelling. Sigre Tommaso Trenta, and Father Federico di Poggio, have furnished us with some notices of them, and they are of opinion that the most distinguished of their number should not be forgotten in a work treating of artists.

The most celebrated of these was Sister Aurelia Fiorentini, who imitated the virtues, as well as the artistic productions, of Plautilla Nelli; and, like her, took Fra Bartolommeo della Porta, and Andrea del Sarto, for her models. She was the daughter of Doctor Andrea Fiorentini of Lucca, and was born in that city, in 1595. Her baptismal name was Isabella. Possessing great genius, and a beautiful person, her father had determined to mate her with some one worthy of such a wife; but Isabella, who was very religious, and cared little for the evanescent pleasures of life, had already made up her mind to take the habit. Her father, in the hope of diverting her purpose, caused her to apply herself to the study of

[1] She was canonized by Benedict XIV., A.D. 1746. In this same monastery there was a celebrated poetess, called Sister Lorenza Strozzi. She was well acquainted with Greek and Latin, and composed elegies and hymns in the latter language, which have been translated into Italian and French. She died aged 70, in 1591.

design and colouring, in which she succeeded beyond his most sanguine anticipations. But, far from abandoning her original intention, she became, if possible, more enamoured of it, and resolved to consecrate herself entirely to God. Her father, therefore, not wishing to thwart her determination, finally permitted her to enter the convent of S. Domenico, in her native city. Here she found that the Superioress, Sister Costanza Micheli, had previously *introduced the Pictorial Art*, (then a generic name for painting and modelling,) and that many of the Nuns were actually practising it. In this holy retreat Fiorentini executed very many pictures, and Trenta enumerates eighteen of her works, some of which were on canvas, and some on panel, together with the lunetts for her church of S. Domenico, which still exist.[1] But the best of all her works was the altar-piece that she painted for the chapel of her family, in the church of S. Lazzaro di Camaiore, A.D. 1662. This picture represents the B. V. M. with the Holy Infant, who gives the wedding ring to S. Catherine of Siena, in the presence of S. Maurizio, S. Vincenzo, S. Lucia, S. Lazzaro, and S. Carlo. Fiorentini inscribed her name on this work; and in 1729, a kinsman of hers, added a Latin inscription, in order to perpetuate the fame of this religious paintress. We have not been able to ascertain the period of her death.[2]

[1] These lunetts are three in number, and represent the Crowning with Thorns—Our Lord falling under the weight of the cross, and Jesus lying dead on His Mother's bosom.

[2] We here give a list of some of Aurelia Fiorentini's paintings, for which we are indebted to Professor Nocchi. The following paintings are still in the convent of S. Domenico, at Lucca:—

PAINTINGS IN OIL.

Over the altar of the chapter-room, a large painting representing the Circumcision; it is known as the "Nome di Gesù." In this work there are

The Lucchese writers mention a Sister Brigid Franciotti, of the monastery of S. Giorgio, who took the Dominican habit in 1532, as a very distinguished paintress and modeller.[1] They also state, that there was a Sister Agnese Castrucci, and a Sister Eufrosina Burlamacchi, both very excellent miniaturists.[2] Sister

many figures of angels, etc.; and it was formerly over the altar of the church. It has been substituted for Bartoni's S. Catherine. Over the altar of the infirmary, is a small picture representing the B. V. M. with the Infant; and suspended from the wall is a large painting of the Deposition from the Cross. In another apartment of the convent there is a picture representing the Blessed Enrico Susone, of the Preaching-friars.

In the hall there is a large altar-piece representing the B. V. on a throne, surrounded by many saints, amongst whom are S. M. Magdalene, S. Lucia, S. Catherine, and other holy protectresses of the convent, etc. At foot of the throne there is an angel playing an instrument. This is in Fra Bartolommeo's manner.

On the grand altar of the public church there is now a painting by the same hand, which has been substituted for one by Fra Bartolommeo, which has been removed to the convent. Said picture represents the Madonna seated on a pedestal, behind which there is a niche, where we behold the Virgin, having in her arms the Divine Infant, who blesses S. Dominic, whilst the later kisses His foot. The saint is on the right of the picture, beside said pedestal, and we see only the upper part of his figure, the rest being concealed by the full length figure of S. Catherine, who is in the foreground, on the right of the throne. On the left is S. Vincenzo: and we see only the upper half of his figure, the under half being hidden by the full length figure of S. Magdalene, at whose feet is seated a little angel, playing a lute. The drapery of the Virgin is in Fra Bartolommeo's style, and her head is covered with a little white cloth. The Infant (nude) is painted with great delicacy and correctness of design. His action is in the Raffaelesque style, and resembles one by Credi, which I have seen at Milan. The drapery of S. Catherine is graceful and flowing. At her feet is a wheel with iron spikes: and the Martyr has a palm-branch in her hand. Magdalene has the accustomed vase of balsam in her right hand, and a book in her left. The whole composition reminds us of Fra Bartolommeo and Andrea del Sarto.

[1] Documenti per Servire alla Storia Patria. Stor. delle belle arti, di Tomasso Trenta, Lucca, 1822. Fed. di Poggio, Memorie riguardanti la Religione Domenicana.

[2] Loc. cit.

Bernardina Ruschi, of the same monastery, is mentioned in the conventual Necrology thus:—"September 11. . . . . Sister Bernardina Ruschi, a paintress on canvas, died. . . . . She painted many images on walls and on canvas, and the altar-piece of the church, and the crucifixes (on canvas) in the cells. In her, our convent has suffered a great loss."[1] Father Federici di Poggio remarks, that if the altar-piece at present in the church be her's, she must have been a highly gifted paintress. It is certain, however, that the monastery had great reason to regret her demise, as we read, *that her pictures on canvas were of the greatest benefit to the convent.*[2] Indeed, mediocre works are very rarely of much utility. The chronicle which Federici quotes, goes on to say, that "she painted excellently on canvas, and executed the picture of the Annunciation for the church, and also decorated the cornices and capitals of the pillars. She also restored the picture of S. Dominic, and the figure of the Virgin, and these of the two holy women." The same chronicle states, that Sister Alessandra Guidiccioni, and Sister Ludovica Carli, painted various miniatures in the choral books belonging to their monastery. May their example influence others.

We might add many names to these we have been recording; but these few are, in every respect, calculated to reflect honour on the Order of S. Dominic. The little we have said of our paintresses, will prove that the Dominican nuns, despite the many obstacles which they had to encounter in cultivating Design, inherited the

[1] Sister Bernardina Ruschi took the habit in 1619, and died in 1649.

[2] Echard Soprani and Professor Rosini praise a Sister Tommasina Fieschi, a Dominican nun, and niece of S. Catherine of Genoa, as a distinguished paintress. She belonged to the convent of SS. Filippo e Giacomo, of that city, but none of her paintings exist.

artistic tastes, which the Angelico and Fra Bartolommeo della Porta bequeathed to our Institute. Need we say, that they deserve our profoundest respect and veneration?

CHAPTER XVI.

Father Ignatius Danti, Mathematician, Cosmographer, Engineer, and Architect.

Although the Preaching-Friars applied themselves zealously, for many ages, to the cultivation of all the arts of design, I would say that they devoted themselves especially to painting and architecture; so much so, that it would be difficult to pronounce which of these two obtained the greatest amount of their predilection. It is true, indeed, that they did not begin to cultivate painting till the fifteenth century; but, as to architecture, it may be said to have been their first, and chiefest study, nor did it ever, for a moment, abandon the cloisters, which it had erected for them. Painting numbers amongst its devotees, only humble Friars, and pious Nuns; whereas, architecture presents to us the names of men celebrated not only for civil and religious sciences, but, also, for the high dignities conferred upon them—nay, and for the sacerdotal character which shed additional lustre on the cultivators of this art. Hence it is that we find distinguished theologians and literary men, Cardinals and bishops, winning renown for themselves by the exercise of this delightful science. The history of architecture in our Order, dates its commencement as early as the times of the two humble lay-brothers, Fra Sisto, and Fra

Ristoro; and after passing through all the grades of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, finds its latest representative in the person of Cardinal Vincenzo Maculano. When we consider the multiplicity of requirements that are necessary to constitute an able architect, we must conclude that this science should rank as sovereignly supreme over all the other arts. Sculpture and painting are far inferior to architecture, in many respects; nor can either of the former excel it in attesting the majesty of religion, the fortunes of a people, or the power of kings; in a word, it requires greater genius for its developments than all the other arts. In fact, architecture may be said to be the grand chronicle not of an individual, but of nations. Time, that destroys all the productions of the pencil and the chisel, seems to concede immortality to architecture, and privileges it to record the prosperity and glory of nations and races. The pyramids of Egypt, the Flavian Amphitheatre, and the Parthenon, are so many adamantine volumes attesting the genius and power of the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans!

The celebrated Professor, Giovanni Vermiglioli, has written so copiously and so accurately of Father Ignazio Danti, the far-famed engineer and architect, that I find it difficult to add anything relating to the life and works of this distinguished Italian; but, as these Memoirs should be defective if we did not speak of this mathematician and astronomer, we have resolved to treat briefly of that portion of Father Ignatius' life, which regards his scientific acquirements, in order that we may have ample room to speak of him as an artificer; since it is by virtue of this title, that he finds a place in these humble pages. Vasari would not have classed him amongst the Italian artists, were it not for the geographical tables that he

delineated and coloured for the Grand Duke Cosimo the First; but as such works had more to do with science than with art, he has not obtained that distinguished place amongst the Italian artists to which he was certainly entitled. But Danti was also a great engineer and architect, and as such, we deem it our duty to speak of him.[1]

Ignatius (whose baptismal name was Pellegrino) was born in Perugia, A.D. 1537. His parents were Giulio Danti, the goldsmith, and Biancofiore Alberti. This family enjoyed all the honour and respect with which a noble and cultivated community is accustomed to remunerate high deserts. The profession of the fine arts, moreover, conferred great celebrity on the Danti, for they revived, in Perugia, the example of the Gaddi and Ghirlandai families, who, in Florence, perpetuated art from father to son, and made it almost traditional. Our Pellegrino had been preceded by Pier Vincenzo, a civil architect; by Giovanni, a military engineer; and by Theodora, a paintress, all of whom were his intimate relatives. He also had a brother called Vincenzo, who was a painter and sculptor[2] of some celebrity, and his senior by seven years. It was thus that the youthful Danti had an opportunity of cultivating the arts within the domestic precincts, where such study was never separated from that of religion and virtuous pursuits. Happy, in sooth, is the child whose young heart receives its earliest impressions from the loving lips of good and

[1] Fathers Echard and Quietif did not study the life of this Dominican as they should, and their biography of him ought to be recast. There is a MS. Chronicle in S. Marco at Florence, which contains a valuable memoir of Danti, whom Father Razzi knew personally. We will extract our notices from the unpublished Memoir, and also from that by Professor Vermiglioli

[2] Gio. Batt. Vermiglioli, Biografia degli Scrittori Perugini.

educated parents. While still a mere boy, he learned the rudiments of painting and architecture from his father, and his aunt, Theodora.[1] But our Pellegrino was not so enamoured of the "beautiful," as to neglect the graver and more practical studies; and as nature had gifted him with taste for sublime speculations, after making his first essays in design and colouring, he devoted himself wholly to mathematics and natural sciences. As such pursuits require peace, silence, and solitude, Pellegrino, who was always religiously inclined, determined to enter the Dominican cloister, being convinced that he could nowhere else find better opportunity for maturing his intellect. He had not yet completed his nineteenth year, when he received the habit of the Preaching-Friars, in the convent of his natal city. He was invested by Father Angelo da Diacceto, the Roman Provincial, on the 7th of March, 1555, and changed his baptismal name for that of Ignatius.[2] Having finished the course of Theology and Philosophy, he zealously preached the Divine word; and Razzi informs us that he became a very graceful pulpit orator. Nevertheless, his earlier pursuits had the most decided charms for him; and, without abandoning ecclesiastical studies, he devoted himself zealously to the cultivation of Mathematics, Astronomy, and Geography. Such studies redounded to the honor of religion, and enlarged the confines, which, in that age, seem to have been narrowed and circumscribed by Scholasticism. In our opinion the surest means of destroying superstition, and particularly the deliriums of Judicial Astrology, in which

[1] Lanzi makes honourable mention of Teodora Danti, and states that she followed the manner of Pietro Perugino and his scholars.—V. Rom. School, Epoch 2.

[2] Razzi, Cronaca, M.S.

the people of that period had such blind faith, was to abandon, for ever, the absurd system of terrorism, and cruel punishment, and to diffuse the study of natural and physical sciences, making them, as it were, a ladder to ascend to the All-sapient and benificent Author of the Universe.

During the period of these studies, Vincenzo, Ignatius's brother, was employed by Cosimo the First, in Florence; and the Grand Duke manifested the greatest respect for a youth who, in his earliest period, rivalled the master-minds of the modern Athens.

Cosimo had determined to revive, in his newly acquired dominion, astronomical and mathematical studies, which had been long neglected; and when he had opened his mind to Vincenzo on this project, the latter urged him to employ his brother, who was then far-famed for his profound knowledge of these sciences. The Duke adopted the suggestion, and immediately invited Ignatius to his court, where he made provision for him, and appointed him his mathematician. We do not know the precise date of this fact, but we have reason to think that it must have been 1567; or, probably 1565. It is certainly marvellous that a man of his years (Ignatius had not then completed his twenty-eighth) could have so thoroughly mastered these difficult sciences, for he had now won the reputation of being an eminent mathematician and architect, and his fame had reached the ears of his holiness, the Pope. About the period of this appointment, Pius the Fifth had been raised to the Pontifical Throne—that is to say, on the 7th of January, 1566; and as the newly elected Pontiff belonged to the Order of the Preaching-Friars, he determined to erect, in his natal place, (Bosco,) near the city of Alessandria, a magni-

convent and church, for the religious of his Order. He, therefore, commissioned Father Ignatius Danti to furnish the designs for both, recommending him, at the same time, to take the convent of S. Marco at Florence, for his model. The bull of the foundation is dated August the 1st, of the year 1566; but some preparations for the building had been made many months previously. We collect this fact from a letter written by Father Agostino da Garezio, dated May 18. The latter was then in Bosco, and wrote to Father Angelo of Milan, thus:—"Father Bassadonne, who is our coadjutor here, has counselled me to give our building to Master Giorgio da Voghera, ... and to employ him to execute all the fine work, cornices, etc. . . . and to prepare them according to the sketch furnished by the *Florentine* architect. He has now set out for Genoa. . . . His Holiness means to enlarge his contributions, and I will certify you of all that shall occur."[1]

This letter would lead us to believe that the architect of these buildings was not a Perugian, but a Florentine. Nevertheless, it is indubitable that Father Ignatius Danti furnished the plans, and the writer must have erred in his designation, or termed him a Florentine, because he was then actually in that city, and in the service of the Grand Duke. In fact, the history of the convent itself, must remove all doubt on the subject. The following fragment will satisfy every one:—"As regards the sketch, it is well known that Saint Pius commissioned Father Ignatius Danti of Perugia, the Dominican architect, to furnish the design of the convent . . ." From various entries in a book entitled, "A Journal of the Building," which was commenced in 1566, and

[1] The history of this convent was published in Alessandria, A.D. 1600.

continued till 1573, we learn that the architect was in Bosco; and we are informed that he meant to set out for Florence, in the May of 1567. Other entries give us to understand that he dwelt in said place during the entire of the year 1568. A letter dated Rome, May 1567, and written by Father Serafino Grindelli, a Canon Regular, to Father Vincenzo da Pavia, corroborates this fact, for it tells us that "the Master has written anent the church, hoping that he and Fra Ignatius will be able to satisfy his Holiness," etc., etc. Said "Journal" informs us that Fra Ignatius received, on the 14th of April, 1569, the sum of ten crowns, for the expenses of his journey thither; together with ten more for the plan of the building.[1] These entries are quite satisfactory as to the part which Fra Ignatius had in the work. They also certify us that he dwelt for some time in Bosco, and leave no doubt as to the year in which he returned to Florence. Here, however, I deem it opportune to make two remarks concerning Ignatius' connection with this edifice. In the first place, the primitive design by the Perugian architect, was not carried out; for, in fact, the convent of Bosco bears no resemblance to that of S. Marco, in design, or execution—in the second place, I must advert, that the intention, as well as generosity, of the Pontiff, may be said to have been defrauded, for whe

[1] The original design of this building is not to be found at present; in the church, however, over the altar of S. Antonio, there is a sketch of the church itself on wood, but its author is unknown. The loss of the original plan is much to be deplored, for if we had it we might be able to form an idea of what this convent might have been. As it is, it nowise corresponds with the grand design of the ingenious and learned architect, Father Danti. Had the original plan been carried out, to say nothing of the solicitude and zeal of the magnanimous founder, (S. Pius V.) it must have been a very different order of building from that which exists at present.

we remember the enormous sum (160,312 gold crowns)[1] which S. Pius expended on the structure, every one must admit that a very different result should have been expected, instead of the inelegant edifice that now exists. It is true that the convent of Bosco is remarkable for solidity and magnificence, but it does not possess a single one of these graces which Vitruvius would have given to any edifice. In a word, it is defective as far as convenience, harmonious arrangements, and light are concerned. I think it probable that the building was confided to Martino Longhi, after the Dominican architect had gone away; and that the Pontiff, at a subsequent period, sent thither the Lombard sculptor and architect, Giacomo della Porta, to measure and estimate the work already executed. Thus, in all probability, the primitive design was altered; either arbitrarily, or with the consent of the Pontiff himself, to the great detriment of the building. The church, however, did not undergo any very important changes, and it was destined to establish Danti's pre-eminence as an architect.

Having returned to Florence, Father Danti set about teaching Mathematics, applying himself, at the same time, to his loved studies of Astronomy and Cosmography, in the convent of S. M. Novella, where Cosimo de' Medici often honoured him with his presence ;[2] for he took very great pleasure in contemplating the maps, astrolabes, and other works produced by the learned

[1] This enormous sum was expended on the building between 1566 and 1572.

[2] Father Razzi tells us that "the Grand Duke supplied him with everything that he required ; and that he very frequently visited him in S. M. Novella, and conversed familiarly with the learned Father, who at this period was teaching mathematics, etc. to the flower of the Florentine noblesse."

Friar, who, at this period, wrote a book entitled "The Use and Construction of the Astrolabe." In 1572, he delineated the first gnomon on the façade of S. M. Novella.[1] In 1573, he translated, into Italian, the Treatise by Proclus Liceus, on the Sphere, and dedicated it to Cardinal Ferdinando de' Medici, who had studied Mathematics under him. In the same year he published a work on Euclid and Heliodorus Larisseus. No one will deny that such productions as these rendered invaluable services to science. In 1574, he delineated the second gnomon on the façade of S. M. Novella. At this precise period, the Grand Duke, Cosimo the First, who had expended enormous sums on a collection of objects of art and antiquity, caused armories to be constructed for them, and commissioned Father Danti to delineate thereon, with all possible accuracy, the geographical charts of all Europe. Danti devoted himself sedulously to his work, and succeeded so admirably, as to elicit the highest encomiums. Vasari says of these maps, "There never has been, at any time, a greater, or a more perfect work."[2] Father Serafino Razzi, however, gives us to understand that Danti merely designed this immense work, and caused it to be coloured under his own eyes, by his scholars, not being able to do so himself, on account of his multifarious avocations. These charts may still be seen in the Palazzo Vecchio; and instead of giving the prolix description, written by Vasari, we will quote what the eminent geographer, Marmocchi, has said of them.[3]

[1] V. Ximenes who has written of this gnomon, and Fineschi's "Lettera sulla facciata di S. M. Novella." The later gives us a beautiful inscription composed by F. Danti, for the tomb of his cousin, who was interred in S. M. N., A.D. 1570.

[2] Degli Accademici del Disegno., v. ii. Ed. Passigli. 1838.

[3] They make in all 53. Europe 14, Africa 11, Asia 14, and America 14.

"Fra Ignazio Danti is the Ortelius of Italy. The contemporary of this great geographer; he was his equal in learning, and by no means less diligent than the former in constructing globes and maps, of which he produced a great number. These that he painted for Gregory XIII., in the Vatican gallery, representing the various provinces of Italy, are well known. As to these that he executed on the façades of the armories of the Palazzo Vecchio, they may be termed a miracle of erudition and elegance. In truth, they clearly show how deeply the study of the classics had been cultivated at that period, and how the artistic taste of the fifteenth century had begun to influence the severest sciences. These maps are constructed in *plane projection;* and though characterised by some of the Tolomean traditions, they evince, nevertheless, Danti's determination to emancipate himself from the prejudices of that school. Here we see him adopting the geographical principles of Gerardo Mercatore, which, at that period, were considered to be most daring innovations, though, in reality, they were the germs of grand progress in science. In fact, Mercatore, Ortelius, and Danti, should be regarded as the founders of modern geography. As to their execution, without doubt, the most beautiful of the maps in the Palazzo Vecchio, are these which represent the different regions of Europe and Africa. He has painted the sea in azure, and, as in nautical charts, he has taken special care to mark the course of the winds with gold and silver lines. He has coloured the land variously, according to the various characteristics of the different regions. The woods are coloured in green, and we may here and there discern the peculiarities of the vegetation. The mountains are drawn in perspective, and painted in chiaroscuro. The lakes and rivers are coloured in blue; and on the

maps, representing distant countries, he has painted the various animals indigenous to them. Nothing can surpass or equal the inscriptions which he has delineated. The names of the mountains, rivers, and provinces, are frequently written in red characters. The inscriptions of the sea, the names of the ports, small islands, rocks, etc. are traced either in gold or silver; and they are thrown out into strong relief by the green or azure ground which our geographical painter has given to the waters. The titles of the maps, which are given with the greatest exactness, may be read in letters of gold at top of the same; and the notes and epigraphs, by means of which the geographer meant to give a brief description of the region represented in the map, together with the natural curiosities of the same, are contained in scrolls which are invariably very exquisitely depicted, both as regards design and colouring. The map representing Asia Minor, Syria, and the island of Cyprus, gives us a lofty idea of the classic erudition of our geographer; and the same may be said of the note which he has appended to the map representing the portion of Southern Asia now known as Hindostan, together with the adjacent islands. In truth, this may be regarded as an evidence of Danti's sound learning; for, in this note he undertook to prove that the Golden Chersonesus of the ancients corresponds to the great island of Sumatra, and not to the peninsula of Malacca, as the learned of his time fancied. I conclude, it is very manifest from all this not to speak of what may be collected from a diligent study of these maps which Danti painted on the doors of the armories, that they are a precious monument of geographical erudition, and of the difficult art of chartography."[1]

[1] Filippo Moisè, *Illustraz. Stor-Artistica del Palazzo Vecchio.* Beside

Nobody has given us precise information of the period in which Danti completed this important work; and I will here observe, that Vasari, speaking of Vincenzo and Ignazio Danti, in the second edition of his Lives, and describing the geographical works of the latter for the armories of Cosimo I., gives us to understand that, at that period Ignatius had not concluded his labours. Wherefore, as the second edition of Vasari did not appear till 1568, I conclude that Ignazio had not then perfected his splendid undertaking.

Whilst this truly learned man was engaged in lecturing on Mathematics, Astronomy, and Geography, the Grand Duke, Cosimo, had conceived a grand project; nor is it improbable that it had been suggested to him by Ignazio Danti. As nature had placed Tuscany almost in the centre of Italy, it would seem as though it had been destined to be the heart and emporium of all the wealth of the peninsula; as it has ever been of Italian refinement. To this ideal prosperity, the rugged chain of the Apennines, which may be said to girdle fertile Tuscany, seemed to present an insuperable difficulty. Every one knows that Florence has only one passage through this mountainous barrier to the Mediterranean, and that nature has thus separated the entire Duchy from Liguria and Romagna, and shut it out from the subalpine provinces of eastern Italy, as well as from the Adriatic. Now, if any one could have been found equal to the task of tunnelling through the Apennines, or effecting a communication between the two seas, (the Adriatic and the Tyrrhene,) Florence, beyond all doubt, must have become the emporium of Italy, and one of

these fifty-three maps, Father Danti painted two large ones of the World, for Cosimo I. In height they are about three and a half braccia each.—V. Vasari and Father S. Razzi.

the most populous and flourishing of the European capitals. Such a grand project as this should not be regarded as visionary, for greater and far more arduous undertakings have been realised in former times; and, indeed, at the very period when men's minds were speculating on this subject, the people of Languedoc had determined to unite the Mediterranean to the Ocean. At a subsequent period, the glorious genius of Pierre Paul Riquet, effected this mighty work, which reflected such honor on him, and so wonderfully contributed to the prosperity of France.[1]

None, save one profoundly versed in Mathematics and Engineering; or, in other words, none but a man whose soul teemed with solid theories, and these grand practical conclusions which are the result of matured experience, could have ventured to engage in such a mighty work, in every respect so worthy of Italian genius. Influenced, no doubt, by such considerations, the Grand Duke, Cosimo, selected Father Ignazio Danti, to conduct the works; for, although the latter was then only thirty-five years of age, he had given such proofs of his erudition in all sciences, as to secure for himself the entire confidence of his Prince. Cantini, in his history of the Duke, Cosimo the First, has put us in possession of this fact so honourable to the Prince and the architect, of whom he had made choice; and the historian tells us that he was indebted for his knowledge of what we have been stating to Bartolommeo Conci, Secretary to Duke Cosimo, who speaks of the subject in a letter dated Pisa, April 24,

[1] This ship-canal was commenced in 1680. It is fifteen leagues in length, and cost seventeen millions. According to Dupont de Nemours it produced for the treasury, in one century, little less than 500 millions in taxes, imports, etc.

1572, and addressed to Mons. Vicenzo Borghini.[1] Let us now hear Cantini's account of Father Ignazio Danti's project:—

"In the vicinity of Mount Consuma, which is situated in the Casentino, and which may be called a continuation of the Apennines, there is, in the direction of Prato Vecchio, a spacious valley, wherein all the mountain streams and torrents were to be collected, in order to form a lake, which should supply two canals, one of which was to discharge itself into the Adriatic, and the other into the Arno, and finally into the Tuscan Sea. It was, likewise, in contemplation to form another lake on the highest point of the Tuscan Apennine. These two canals could not be navigable without a considerable number of artificial cataracts; or, as they are commonly termed, *locks*—not so much on account of the country itself, which is very mountainous, as on account of the supply of water, which in these regions is not very abundant. Had this project been realised, it must have facilitated the traffic between Tuscany and the Levant; and Tuscany must have become what Pisa was in the remote ages: an emporium for Eastern merchandise. In fact, if they had constructed the canal, the results to Tuscany must have been immense, and Florence should then have ranked amongst the most commercial of the European capitals. . . . . We do not know what may have diverted Cosimo from his purpose; perhaps it was death, which soon afterwards carried him off; or, he may have abandoned it when he reflected that the canal should be frozen in the winter season, and that all traffic should, on this account, be suspended for a considerable period of each year, not to speak of the delays and

[1] Vita di Cosimo I.

interruptions which should inevitably be occasioned by the aforesaid causes. As to his successor, the Grand Duke Francesco, he was not able to encounter the enormous expenditure, which such an extraordinary undertaking must involve, and it was thus that Tuscany was deprived of a work that should have contributed immensely to its resources.

Though this project was not realized, it cannot fail to convince us of the high estimation in which Father Danti was held at that period, for we have seen that he was chosen to be the architect and engineer of such a marvellous work. Neither would we credit Cantini, who would have us believe that this project was originated in France, since it is far more likely that Francis I. had been informed of Danti's plan by Duke Cosimo; and that the former availed himself of the reverend father's suggestions. Certain it is that neither the king of France nor the Grand-Duke meditated this great work, with the intention of leaving its execution to those who came after them. For our part, we would fain hope that Danti's project and the generous intentions of the Medici, may not have been thrown away on Tuscany or Italy. Perhaps the day is not distant, when, by means of canals, tunnellings, and railways, the inhabitants of Emilia and Venice may be brought into intimate relation with the people of Tuscany and Liguria!

In the year 1574, Father Ignazio Danti lost his generous patron, Cosimo I. who, at that period, passed out of this life; but his successor, Francesco I., to whom he had taught mathematics, retained him in his service, and secured to him the stipend granted by his father. The Dominican, however, did not tarry long in Florence; for the University of Bologna was desirous of having him as professor of Mathematics and Astronomy; and it is very

probable that the Pope interposed to promote the interests of said University. It would appear that he set out for Bologna between 1575 and 1576; and Alidosi says that he remained there till 1583.[1] I will not here enumerate the various learned productions of this distinguished writer, as they may be found in the pages of Vermiglioli, and as they are not distinctly connected with the subject-matter of this Memoir; but in lieu of them I will mention an architectural work which he designed during his sojourn in Bologna—a chapel which was built at that period in the church of S. Domenico, in that city. We are indebted to Razzi and Oretti for an account of it; and they both inform us that it was called the chapel of *All the Relics*. This work, however, no longer exists, as it was destroyed when the church was restored.

Whilst he was teaching in Bologna, Pietro Ghislieri, governor of Perugia, invited Father Ignazio to his native city, where, at the request of his compatriots, he designed and coloured charts of the suburbs and august territory of the Perugian Republic, which may still be seen in a hall of the palace dei Signori. This work was subsequently exhibited at Rome; and he added to it the various castles and bridges of the Tiber, together with the principal objects of said region. He also produced a coloured chart of the territory of Orvieto, which was published in Rome, A.D. 1583;[2] but Fathers Quietif and Echard seem to have been ignorant of the latter. And as we are now treating of geographical productions, we deem it our duty to make incidental mention of some

[1] Vermiglioli, *Biografia degli Scrittori Perugini*. Perugia, 1829.

[2] Razzi. "*Abraham Ortelius inserted these two charts in his great work, 'Theatrum Orbis Terrarum.'*"—V. Mappa, lxxxiii. Antwerp Edition.

famous geographers and historians who reflected lustre on the Dominican Order, a few years before Danti's times. The first of these is Father Leandro Alberti, a Bolognese, whom we have quoted frequently. He not only described all Italy, but he likewise made charts of Sicily and Sardinia. Nothing could have excelled their correctness; and they were published in Venice in 1568, *i, e.*, after the author's decease. These were subsequently inserted by Ortelius, in his far-famed work. The second is Mons. Agostino Giustiniani of Genoa, bishop of Nebbio in Corsica, celebrated for his polyglot bible and for his Annals of the Republic of Genoa. He made a second chart of the aforesaid island, of which he himself writes in his Annals, under date 1470. Let us hear him. "*I have very minutely described the Island of Corsica for the benefit of my country. I have dedicated it to Prince Andrea Doria. I have also given a description of it in a distinct painting; and I have presented the whole to the magnificent guild of S. Giorgio.*" This map, executed by Guistiniani, about 1531, was inserted by Ortelius, together with those by Danti and Alberti, in his Theatre of the Universe.

Gregory XIII., who was a most munificent patron of arts and sciences, now invited Father Danti to the Eternal City, and appointed him to the distinguished position of Pontifical Mathematician, allowing him to retain, at the same time, his professorship in the University of Bologna. In fact, our good father had refused the offers which were made him by many of the reigning sovereigns; and Pope Gregory, after having had personal experience of Danti's marvellous learning, placed the most unbounded confidence in him, and frequently employed him in matters of the greatest moment; there was no favour which the Pope would refuse him. Hence it was that he employed him

in a variety of works, amongst which was the reformation of the Roman Calendar, to say nothing of the commissions which he gave him to execute in the Vatican Gallery. We now deem it our duty to speak at some length of the many services which he rendered to all the arts of design during his sojourn in Rome.

All these artists whom the generosity of Leo X. and Clement VII. had induced to fix their abode in Rome, were at this period wandering about through the various provinces of Italy, and cast homeless on the world by the barbarity of Charles V.; nevertheless, in every region which they visited, they were sure to leave splendid monuments of the glorious School of the Urbinese. But as soon as Rome had been freed from the malediction—and, indeed, we know no other designation better suited to the atrocities perpetrated by the *free-lances* of the Constable Bourbon—the Roman Pontiffs resolved to recal both arts and artists to their predestined domicile. Alas! both men and times were sadly changed; and that Pontifical munificence which had raised painting and all the arts of design to the highest pinnacle of glory, was now bestowed on their degenerate successors, who immeasurably increased, nay, propagated the evil. When Paul III. threw open the Sala Regia, and invited thither a phalanx of painters to contend for fame and fortune, he found that the splendid geniuses had disappeared, and that men of great ability had been succeeded by a more *vitious progeny (progeniem vitiosiorem)*. Giulio Romano had died in Mantua; Pierin del Vaga had scarcely begun to execute the paintings in the Sala, in the same style as

[1] In the report presented to Gregory XIII. by the congregation appointed to reform the Roman Calendar, Danti subscribes himself thus:—"Ego Frat. Ignatius Dantes Ord. Præd. in almo Gymnas. Bonon. Mathemat. Profess. Perugin. die festo Exaltat. Crucis, A.D. 1580."

Raffaello had painted the loggie of the Vatican—nay, he had not yet completed the designs of his histories, when death deprived the Pontiff of his services. He was succeeded by Daniel da Volterra, by Salviati, the Zuccheri, and other feeble painters. When Gregory XIII. ascended the throne, his earnest wish was to raise Italian art to imperishable glory; and he must have accomplished his object *if gold could have created artists, or inspired them with true notions of the Beautiful.* Not satisfied with having founded the celebrated Academy of S. Luke, he determined to continue these works which the celestial fantasy of Raffaello had left in the Vatican Gallery;[1] but at this period art had not only been vitiated, but was rapidly hastening to ruin. The painters whom he invited to carry out his intentions, were Niccolo Circignani, better known as Pomarancio, Lorenzino da Bologna, Roncalli, Tempesti, Raffaellino da Reggio, Palma, then a youth, Girolamo Massei, and Girolamo Muziano.[2] The Pontiff appointed Pomarancio and Muziano to superintend these works, and he placed Father Danti over them both. And this, says Lanzi, was a very wise arrangement, as nothing can be more prejudicial than to leave the execution of such works entirely to the artists themselves; for, indeed, there are few who, in the selection of subordinate painters, are not influenced by prejudices, avarice, and jealousies The choice of them was now confided to Danti, who to his knowledge of art, added the most unblemished morality; and thus was the whole work so admirably distributed, and so well conducted, that the peace and

[1] It is thought that Danti built this wing of the Vatican. Ghilini and Ercolani, the bishop of Perugia, who was a personal friend of our architect, states this.

[2] Lanzi, Stor. Pitt. Rom. Sch. Epoch 3.

quiet, if not the genius, of Raffaello's days seemed to have returned once more to the Vatican. In fact, Agostino Taia informs us, that "this ingenious and prudent Father seemed to have been sent by God at this precise period—nay, he was destined for the advancement of the fine Arts as well as for the benefit of the persons professing the same, so admirable were his predicates for such pursuits."[1] And that the Vatican might not lack some monument of the good Father's genius and handicraft, the Pope caused him to execute many charts of ancient and modern Italy; a work that shall eternize the name and fame of this religious. Vermiglioli states, that these maps were coloured between 1577, and 1580.[2] We think this the place to record another service which he conferred on the Arts, although it proved to be in some measure fatal to them. Amongst the boys employed to attend on the painters, who were engaged in the Vatican Gallery, there was a Neapolitan youth, who, although lost in the crowd of servitors, did not elude the vigilant eye of Danti. From time to time this youth amused himself designing and colouring little figures, which gave evidence of marvellous talent; and the father having, as it were, a foresight of his powers, took an opportunity of directing the Pope's attention to some of his sketches, one day that his Holiness came to inspect the works which we owe to his munificence. The Pontiff was astonished by these essays, and he determined that this youth should be provided with means, till such time as his artistic education had been finished. This young Neapolitan was called Giuseppe Cesari, but he is better known as the *Cavaliere di Arpino*. His genius was great, but led astray by evil maxims and worse

[1] Agost. Taia, *Descrizione del Palazzo Vaticano.* [2] Loc. cit.

examples, he devoted himself to *mannerism*, and thus propagated the corruption of art.

The learned labours of Ignazio Danti did not terminate here; for he had scarcely finished the geographical charts, when he began to write the life of the celebrated architect, Jacopo Barozzi da Vignola, together with his precious annotations on the work entitled, "Practical Perspective,"[1] written by the same learned author. The Pontiff now commissioned another celebrated architect, Giovanni Fontana, to repair the Claudian harbour; and Father Ignazio furnished all the designs, carefully preparing them according to the ancient remains.[2] As a reward of all these learned labours, Gregory XIII. bestowed on Father Danti the bishopric of Alatri, in the Roman Campagna. This appointment was made in the November of 1583. In his new office he comported himself in every respect, as became a learned and zealous Pastor, attending diligently to his flock, and everywhere restoring the divine worship. Having convoked a Diocesan Synod, he abolished many abuses, erected a Mont de Pieté for the benefit of the poor;[3] restored

[1] This work was published in Rome, 1583. Vignola's life has been reproduced by Baldinucci V., Decenn IV., Del Secolo IV.

[2] Vermiglioli states, that F. Danti made a precious collection of original designs, by the most famous architects; at present we do not know what has become of it.

[3] It should not be forgotten that Savonarola, amongst his other innumerable good works, for which he was venerated by S. Catherine de Ricci, and S. Philip Neri, established a Mont de Pieté, at Florence, to protect the poor against the extortions of Jew and Christian usurers. Muriani, in his History of the Council of Trent, states, that a Jew offered the Florentine Republic 20,000 gold florins, on condition that the magistrates would forbid the erection of such a beneficent institution. Many of the infamous men concerned in the revolting murder, or rather martyrdom of Savonarola, were usurers, or partisans of the extortioners denounced by the Scriptures and the Church.

and embellished the Episcopal Palace; furnished his Churches with splendid requirements, and edified the faithful entrusted to his charge, by constantly preaching the divine word. When Sixtus V. was about erecting the grand obelisk in the piazza of the Vatican, (A.D. 1586,) not satisfied with having committed this stupendous undertaking to the architect, Domenico Fontana, he invited Mons. Danti to Rome, to aid the wonderful operation.[1] As soon as the immense "Wizard Stone of Egypt" was raised to its pedestal, Sixtus V. caused Danti to delineate at its base a gnomon, indicating the equinoxes and solstices; and for this assertion we have the authority of Father Serafino Razzi, a contemporary writer—an authority, in sooth, quite sufficient to remove all doubt as to the fact. On his return to Alatri, Mons. Danti took a fever, which deprived him of life after eight day's sickness. He died in the year 1586, on the 19th of October, aged only forty-nine years. His people bewailed him and blessed his memory.

Every one who values Italian Arts and Sciences, must venerate the name of Ignazio Danti. Whilst living, he enjoyed the friendship of two grand Dukes of Tuscany, of two Popes, and that of the most distinguished artists of his period. He was among the first of those who undertook to write on the abstruse doctrines of Astronomy and Cosmography; and in language so terse, that Perticari regrets he did not get an honoured niche in the Academy della Crusca.[2] But he who raised a

[1] "The raising of the obelisk was commenced on the 30th of April, 1586. The work was continued till the 30th of June; but on account of the excessive heats, the workmen had to remain inactive till the 9th of September, when the great obelisk was raised to its base."—Milizia.

[2] *Degli Scrittori del Trecento.* Gamba has inserted in his "Testi di Lingua," some of the works of Father Danti.

marble monument over his brother, Vincenzo, failed to procure from posterity a single stone to point where his remains are mouldering.

Heaven grant that the exemplary and laborious life of Father Ignazio Danti, may be a mirror for the religious of this, and of every succeeding age.

CHAPTER XVII.

Father Domenico Portigiani, a most skilful Caster in Bronze, and Architect.

It is to us a source of inestimable delight, that we have been able to rescue some names worthy of veneration and remembrance, from the destructive hands of time, and the cold neglect of ungrateful men. These humble efforts of ours, therefore, should deserve the approbation of every good man who may have been cruelly neglected, or unjustly oppressed during his mortal career, for they prove that the genius of history keeps faithful watch over him, and that her vengeance, though it may appear to be tardy, is, nevertheless, unfailing, and empowered by God to eternize him in the recollection of posterity. Such feeble ability as ours, may not be able, perhaps, to secure perpetual fame for those over whose honoured heads we would fain set an aureole of glory; nevertheless, we feel ourselves largely remunerated, when we reflect that we have made an attempt to do so, and some such sentiment is stirring in our heart, now that we are about to write of Father Domenico Portigiani.

The man, who in his times was second to none in the difficult art of casting in bronze—the man who assisted the celebrated sculptor, Gian Bologna, (of whom he,

probably, was the disciple) in his many extraordinary works, in our opinion, was fully entitled to honourable mention in the history of Italian sculpture; nevertheless he has been unkindly overlooked by Cicognara; and what is worse, Baldinucci has attributed many of Portigiani's rare productions to Gian Bologna and his scholars. These are the motives which have induced me to give a rapid sketch of his life, and to publish the notices regarding him, which I have fortunately discovered in the archives of the Cathedral of Pisa, and in these of the convent of S. Marco in Florence.

Master Zanobi Portigiani, the caster in bronze, was the father of our Domenico, who saw the light in 1536, and whose baptismal name was Bartolommeo. I have not, however, ascertained the name of his natal place, nor am I satisfied whether it was the little town of San Miniato al Tedesco, or Florence.[1] For some years he applied himself to the art of polishing bronzes, under his father's tuition; and it is only reasonable to suppose, that his parent taught him to design and to model in clay. During these first essays, he never neglected the study of letters, in which he made considerable progress, so much so, that after having acquired a knowledge of Latinity, he determined to dedicate himself to God in the holy ministry. On the 5th of August, 1552, he was invested with the Dominican habit, by Father Vincenzo Ercolani of Perugia, in the convent of S. Marco. At this period Portigiani had not reached his seventeenth year; and on being received among the religious of the choir, he took the name of Domenico. It appears certain, that after receiving the habit, he set out for the convent of S. Domenico in Pistoja, to make his novitiate; and that he was professed

[1] In a contract between the superintendents of the Duomo of Pisa and Portigiani, the latter is called a Florentine.

there by Father Lodovico Buoninsegni, the sub-Prior of said convent, August 14th, 1553.[1]

When Portigiani reached Pistoja, Fra Paolino Signoracci had been some time dead, and he was the last of that glorious line of painters belonging to the congregation of S. Marco. Plautilla Nelli, the Dominican paintress, however, was still living in Florence, and at this period may be said to have been in the bloom of womanhood. I have always remarked, that those gifted with good disposition and natural ability, who have taken the religious habit, influenced by pure and holy motives, are always sure to make the calm peacefulness of the cloister subserve some grand purpose, and that men of this stamp are wont to apply themselves to some useful pursuit, and to labour thereat till they finally distinguish themselves; thus, at one and the same time, reflecting honour on their private lives, and on the religion which they profess. Were I to enumerate all the members of our Order who have devoted themselves to mechanical pursuits, it is not material that I would require but time. Of these, however, was Father Domenico Portigiani, who, because nature had not gifted him with ability for the study of Ecclesiastical Sciences, devoted himself to that of the arts of design, for which he had the most decided aptitude. Meanwhile, however, he had made himself thoroughly acquainted with the architectural works of Vitruvius, and Leon Battista Alberti, the grandest masters of this most noble art; and, indeed, in a very inconsiderable time, he made such proficiency, that he was able to superintend the construction of various buildings for the religious in Florence and Fiesole.[2] Resuming from time

[1] Gori and Richa erred when stating that Portigiani was a lay brother.

[2] Annal Conv. S. Marci de Florentia. "*This Father, in his avocation of Architect, restored many edifices which were either destroyed or in a ruinous*

to time his early habit of modelling and casting in bronze, he executed various works, most diligently and excellently; and the memoirs of the convent inform us, that he cast fountains, statues, *cannons*, bells, and all sorts of domestic utensils. These memoirs know no limits to praise, when speaking of the wonderful polish which he knew how to give to the various descriptions of bronze ornaments; and every one acquainted with the arts of design, must be aware what diligence, nay, and skill, a man must possess before he acquires distinction in this particular branch. In fact, after making the cast an artist of this sort must know how to ply the burin, the chisel and the rasp, giving *relief* to the composition whenever necessary, and the most elaborate smoothness to the surface. This, we need scarcely say, is finally accomplished with the rasp and pumice-stone. As to the colouring, the agencies usually employed are, oil, vinegar and varnish, according to the tint which the artist desires to give to the bronze, which is generally coloured black or green. Requirements such as these will convince us, that a bronze caster must possess singular skill and practice before his work can appear in its integrity and purity, and it should be borne in mind, that Ghiberti employed the most distinguished sculptors and goldsmiths of Florence to help him in polishing the bronze gates of S. Giovanni, before they were hung on their hinges. Amongst those who aided him in this work were Masolino da Panicale, and Antonio del Pollaiuolo.

During his sojourn in Florence Portigiani became acquainted with Gian Bologna, and availed himself of his great master's precepts, which did much to perfect him in the art of casting; and, as the former was con-

ate; nay, he rebuilt some of them." Amongst his other architectural works as the novitiate of Fiesole, erected after his designs.

stantly employed by the Grand Duke in many and important works of this sort, he frequently engaged the services of Portigiani. Now it so happened that the Salviati family, after having obtained from the Fathers of S. Marco the *juspatronatus* of the altar of S. Dominic, beneath which was laid the uncorrupted body of S. Antonio, Archbishop of Florence, determined to erect a magnificent chapel, and there deposit the mortal relics of the saint. For this purpose the Salviati invited the most distinguished artists of Florence to come and devote all their powers to the decoration of the chapel. Painters, sculptors, architects, and bronze casters were summoned to this work; and the munificence of the Salviati was such as might have been worthy of a great monarch, as they expended eighty thousand dollars on the construction and ornamentation of the chapel. Gian Bologna was appointed to direct all the works, and the chapel was built after his design: he also rebuilt the church. Alessandro Allori, called *il Bronzino*, was selected to paint the cupola and the grand altar-piece. The two lateral paintings were coloured by Francesco Morandini da Poppi, and Battista Naldini of Florence; whilst Passignano was engaged to execute the two grand historical frescos in the vestibule. Of the six statues, one was sculptured by Gian Bologna himself, and the rest by his pupils. All the works in bronze were entrusted to Father Domenico Portigiani.

The first care of Gian Bologna was to prepare a splendid urn for the body of the Saint; and it was determined that the material of this should be black oriental marble, and that the recumbent figure (life-size) of the holy Archbishop should be executed in bronze, and laid upon it. Gian Bologna furnished the design; and Portigiani made the cast. This work was executed with

the greatest diligence possible, and nothing could have exceeded the beautiful modelling of the head, or the high polish which Portigiani gave to the whole composition. Over the six statues which adorn the chapel, were placed six histories executed in bronze. These basreliefs were in height very nearly two and a half braccia, and in width little less than a braccio and a half. Beautiful as was the design by Gian Bologna, it did not excel Portigiani's workmanship. The first history, which is over the statue of S. John Baptist, represents S. Antonino preaching to the Florentines. The second, over the statue of S. Philip, the Apostle, describes S. Antonino entering Florence after he had been created Archbishop. The passage of the saint's history chosen by the artist, is that which tells us how the Saint came into the city, barefooted, and accompanied by the magistrates and clergy. In the third, over the statue of S. Thomas of Aquino, we behold the Archbishop resuscitating a dead child. In the fourth, which is over the statue of S. Edward of England, he represents S. Antonino distributing alms to the poor. The fifth, which is over the statue of S. Dominic, exhibits S. Antonino receiving the habit of a Preaching-Friar; and, finally, the sixth, over the statue of S. Antonio, Abbot, represents the holy Archbishop absolving the Florentine magistrates from the ecclesiastical censures in which they involved themselves by violating the jurisdiction of the church. In the interior façade of the chapel, he executed three highly-finished bronze statues. These are three angels, one of whom is standing in the centre, while the other two are seated at either side. He also cast two bronze candelabra, which were placed before the saint's altar, the mensa (table) of which he executed in metal, adorned with the most faultless arabesques.

Thus was the beauteous chapel built and decorated; and thus did Portigiani's name acquire celebrity. Indeed, Father Serafino Razzi tells us that "*the Grand Duke would have given Portigiani a pension had he been disposed to devote himself to this profession; and he (the Duke) would have placed some youths under the Father that they might learn the art of casting in bronze from him. But Portigiani, regarding this as at variance with his religious vocation, would have abandoned the art after he had finished the works in the chapel of S. Antonino, if he had not been bound by obedience to cultivate the art. This good Father has now passed his fiftieth year, and is confessor in the monastery of S. Dominic in Florence. He has a brother named Hieronimo, who is employed as an engineer in the service of the Duke of Savoy.*"[1] To this important authority we will subjoin that of the continuator of the Annals of the convent of S. Marco, who records that the King of Ethiopia had applied to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, requesting him to send some one well skilled in bronze-casting to that distant region, in order that the youths of that country might learn this art. "Had Portigiani," quoth the Annalist, "consented, he would have got the appointment in preference to all his Florentine competitors."[2] But the bronze gates of the Cathedral of Pisa, may be regarded as the grandest work by Portigiani; and of a certainty they shall eternize his name. He, however, at the time of his death, left them half finished; and it is to be regretted that he was not spared to perfect them. Of this stupendous work, concerning which Morrona (the author of Pisa Illustrata) had not very accurate information, we will now speak at some length, on the authority of the docu-

[1] Razzi, Istoria degli Uomini Illustri. [2] Annal S. Marci.

ents which we have found in the archives of said thedral. On the night of the 25th of October, 1595, e roof and gates of the cathedral of Pisa, were con- med by a terrible fire. This calamity was attributed the heedlessness of a plumber who had been engaged pairing the lead-work with which the edifice was vered. The fire caused the destruction of the bronze ates which Bonanno, the Pisan sculptor and architect, d cast in 1180; and these were a most important onument of Italian genius, at a period nowise propitious the arts. Having determined to restore not only the and gate but the lateral ones also, the authorities had course to Gian Bologna, who was now the most dis- guished amongst the Florentine casters. But the times ere no longer like these of Ghiberti, Donatello, and copo della Quercia, when the Florentines, after having termined to construct the wonderful gates of the aptistery, summoned "*all the most distinguished masters Italy to come and give proof of their powers.*"— asari.) Far otherwise, for now, that art was declining d native talent had disappeared, a stranger was invited Pisa to erect this solemn monument. However, as work was gigantic, and as Gian Bologna of Douay, s now far advanced in years, he called to his assistance ny of his disciples, among whom were Pietro Fran- villa, Antonio Susini, Pietro Tacca, Orazio Mocchi, ovanni dall' Opera, and others. All of these were arged to make wax models of the designs furnished by an Bologna; but as for making the bronze casts, no ificer could be found to excel Father Domenico Por- iani. Morrona fell into a grievous error when he stated t the aforesaid three gates were not modelled in rence before the year 1601; for, if this were true, should necessarily follow that Father Portigiani, who

died about the beginning of that year, could not have left the gates half finished as he really did.[1] In fact, as early as 1596, we find that various sums were paid to this Father on account of the gates of the cathedral;[2] and we conclude from a letter written by Giovanni Battista Cresci, dated November 30, of the same year, that Portigiani, as it were to give a specimen of his workmanship, was already elaborating a history and some ornamentations for said gates. Here are his words:—"*Whenever Father Portigiani needs money, you will pay him as he may desire; and I, for my part, have tendered him some already. You are now aware that all the arrangements have been completed, and the dimensions of the gates have been determined. We would hope that you are pleased with the ornamentation, as well as with the distribution of the work. Should the Lord grant them life and health, they will produce a work calculated to astonish every one in all that regards order, mysteries, subjects, and workmanship. If you could now only see the picture they have finished, it would appear to be quite a different thing.*" The contract between the superintendents of the work and Father Portigiani, was signed in Pisa, on the 22nd of April, 1597, according to the ancient Pisan computation. This valuable and unpublished record, which was discovered in the archives of the cathedral, shall be given amongst the documents.[4] From it we learn that Portigiani was commissioned to cast the three gates, together

[1] Pisa Illustrata.

[2] June 6, 1596, Portigini acknowledges to have received 250 dollars on account of the gates *which were being cast for the cathedral.* There is also another acknowledgment, dated July 23, 1596; and the receipts dated in the subsequent years are so numerous, that we feel ourselves obliged to omit them.

[3] Monumenta Restaurationis Pis. Primatial. Ecclesiæ.

[4] V. Document at the end of this vol.

with all their histories and ornamentations "*according to the wax models executed on wood, which have been consigned to said Father;*" which models "*were to be produced by excellent masters, and so wrought as to merit the approbation of Messrs. Gio. Bologna and Raffaello di Pagno, the architect.*" We will now enumerate the conditions by which Portigiani bound himself to the superintendents of the cathedral. In the first place, Portigiani pledged himself to *assist personally in setting up said gates as soon as they had been finished.* Secondly, the superintendents of the works were obliged to provide him with some place in Florence where he could conveniently make the castings; and they were also bound to furnish him with all the metal necessary for said gates, *and to allow him ten per cent. for the waste;* thirdly, *the whole work was to be finished and polished in the most excellent style;* and in case of any difference between Portigiani and the superintendents, Gian Bologna and Raffaello di Pagno were appointed to act as arbitrators. Fourthly, the superintendents agreed to pay Father Portigiani for the casting of said bronze gates 2,200 *dollars; and* 50 *dollars per month for the next six months, after the expiration of which he shall receive a sum proportionate to the work which he executes daily.* Fifthly, the superintendents stipulated to discharge all claims that Portigiani might have on them, as soon as he delivered the three gates *in a perfect state to said superintendents in Florence, i. e. after the expiration of two years, commencing on the* 1*st of May of the current year*," Finally, Portigiani and his nephew, Zanobi di Girolamo Portigiani, subscribed these conditions, and pledged themselves to the observance thereof. This valuable document will not leave us to question whether a part or the whole of this admirable work was confided to Portigiani; and, furthermore, the

Chronicle of S. Marco distinctly tells us "*that he elaborated the imposts and thresholds of the three gates, and also of the principal gate of the Pisan cathedral with most singular skill.*"[1] The Zanobi Portigiani mentioned in the contract, was the nephew and pupil of Father Portigiani, whom he assisted in casting the gates; and it would appear that the former finished them after his uncle's death. Neither should we forget to mention a certain Agnolo, who, according to Morrona, was called Serrano, and was employed to help Portigiani at this marvellous work.

Aided by these two young men the religious of S. Marco commenced the laborious task of polishing the Three Gates; and I have discovered in the archives of the cathedral, acknowledgments of various sums given to Portigiani, on account of same.[2] Notwithstanding all the anxieties and incessant toil of the Reverend Artificer, he was not able to finish the work within the time specified by the contract; for he had now overpassed his eightieth year, and though his health was very variable, he had only the two young men to help him. His continual occupation about the furnace, and uninterrupted application to this most insalubrious sort of work soon brought on a grievous malady, which, after a very short period, caused his death. A letter dated Florence February 3rd, 1601, and addressed by Father Guidi, a Dominican Friar, to the Superintendents of the Cathe-

[1] Pisa Illustrata.

[2] These receipts make altogether 34, and they were signed between 15[illegible] and 1601, we subjoin two of them. "*I Fra Dom. Portigiani have received from M. Jacobi, the providore, two thousand pounds of tin, delivered to me at the foundry by order of the overseers.*" Another is of the following tenor "Francesco di Santo Regolo pay Giovanni Procaccio 8 lire for the carriage of the models of the gates which were sent to Florence for Father Portigiani etc.—Horatio Roncioni, Pietro Maracci," etc.

ral of Pisa, informs us that at that period Father ortigiani was fast hastening to his earthly bourne. "I rrived in Florence, yesterday," writes Guidi, "and und Father Domenico Portigiani in a very delicate ate of health; although gradually declining his intellect vigorous, and he speaks collectedly, and chiefly of s works. He is never tired giving instructions to his ephew concerning what has been executed, as well as hat remains to be finished. The nephew is most wil- ng to perfect the whole, and he will avail himself of the rvices of a very skilful person who is now and has been therto in the employment of Father Domenico; this an's name is Agnolo, and the nephew will communi- te with the superintendents in order to learn their easure in all things pertaining to the work. As to gnolo's capability, Father Domenico gives him the rongest recommendations, and certifies that no one is tter suited for work of this sort. The Prior and all of join in the recommendation, for we see that Portigiani sires to attend to the workshop, and to remain as iet as possible. However, if you should entertain any ubts of Agnolo's ability, it is very easy to give him as ich material as will suffice for a day's work, in order at there may be no loss of time; in fact, he will com- ete the work much more speedily than the Father could ve done it, as he has determined to devote himself clusively to it, as he will tell you viva voce. This ing Sunday we have not been able to commence the ventory which has been ordered; to-morrow, however, t suits the convenience of the providore, we will begin and comply with all your desires. Meanwhile the work ogresses, and that no time may be wasted, and that the perintendents may have no reason to complain of any olation of the written promise, the Father will resume

the work and expedite it with all possible diligence; this is all that I have to communicate at present." Two days after the date of this letter Father Portigiani passed out of this life: that is to say, on the 5th of February 1601, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and fiftieth of his cloister life.[1] It would appear that the finishing of the gates was suspended for about a year after his demise; but it is quite certain that the superintendents of the cathedral deputed the Florentine Sculptor, Antonio Susini, to estimate the work which Portigiani had executed.

This occurred on the 24th of January, 1602; and the Dominicans of the Convent of S. Marco, Florence, employed an artist who had their confidence to attend for the same purpose. Susini chose as his colleague in this business Pietro Tacca, the Sculptor, who was a disciple of Gian Bologna, and indeed *the former was well acquainted with what had been done as he had supplied the models.* But let us hear Susini[2] concerning the result of this valuation: "*Having met, they (the deputies) read the inventory of all the castings made by Fra Domenico, as well as of the histories, friezes, cornices, models in wax and clay, and they then declared that Fra Domenico had left the gates half finished, and that it was their duty to consider what amount of money he had disbursed for said models in wax, as well as what had been expended by the superintendents on the histories after Portigiani's demise, that they might thus square their accounts and indemnify each other. . . . . And, indeed, it was only fair that the heirs of said father should not sustain any loss.*"

It is perfectly certain that the gates cast by Ghiber-

[1] V. Document.

[2] Lettera di Ant. Susini (Jan. 24, 1602)—*Monumenta Rest. Primatis Ecclesiæ Pisanæ.*

or the Church of S. Giovanni in Florence, are by far he grandest that have ever come from the hands of man; nd it is equally certain that these of the Cathedral of Pisa, are excelled by none save these which Michelngiolo pronounced to be fit for the portal of Heaven. The principal gate cast by Portigiani is twelve braccia igh, by six wide; the height of the two lateral ones is ight and a half braccia, and their width four and two hirds. A beautiful moulding, admirably cast, consisting f leaves, fruits, and flowers in which nature is most appily imitated, divides each of the imposts into four ompartments; on these are represented the principal nysteries of the life of the Blessed Virgin, and of that f our Redeemer. The attitudes of the figures are well lefined, the drapery is most perfect, and some of the igures seem to detach themselves from the ground. The rnamentations contain various emblems relating to the istories. On the friezes are various prophets and saints, whose movements and extremities partake of Michelngiolo's grave style. There are also various hieroglyphics with appropriate epigraphs; each of the two ateral gates has a similar moulding dividing the imposts nto three compartments. The imposts of both represent assages of the life and passion of the Saviour; and on he lintels and angles are eight figures of saints. One oes not need much connoisseurship in order to perceive ow thoroughly Portigiani was skilled in this art, or ow beautifully he has cast and polished these three ates, which constitute the grandest ornament of this lendid cathedral.

Here end our notices of Portigiani. The continuator of ne annals of the Convent of S. Marco lauds his prudence nd piety, and tells us that he was successively master of ovices, confessor to the nuns of the Order, and subprior

in the convent of S. Marco, as well as in others of that congregation. No one of his Institute succeeded him in the art of casting in bronze. Indeed the Dominican Sculptors may be said to have formed an illustrious triumvirate, grander than which is not to be found in the annals of Art. Fra Guglielmo Agnelli was most distinguished as a statuary; Fra Damiano da Bergamo was assuredly the most famous of all the carvers in wood; and after Gian Bologna, who is it that has excelled Fra Domenico Portigiani as a caster in bronze?

CHAPTER XVIII.

Father Domenico Paganelli of Faenza, Architect and Civil Engineer.

If we be greatly indebted to those whose pencils and chisels have furnished us with sublime and holy lessons; and if we are bound to laud and venerate those artists who cater to our delight, by imitating the varied beauties of nature on the canvas or in marble, it must be admitted, that those who applied themselves to the study of civil and military architecture, have still stronger claims on our gratitude and admiration. There are many sciences in which a man may be highly useful to Society at large; but as far as the requirements of one's country are concerned, nothing can be more important than a profound knowledge of civil and military architecture, and particularly of that branch known as hydraulics. Hence it is, that France cherishes the memory of Craponne and Riquet; whilst Italy consecrates the names of Fra Giocondo and Lionardo da Vinci. No

less dear to the inhabitants of Faenza is the name of Father Domenico Paganelli, whom we are now about to introduce to our readers, and whose life, as far as we have ascertained, has been hitherto neglected by Italian historians.

According to Tonduzzi, the noble family of Paganelli, originally belonged to Forlimpopoli; but on the destruction of that place, in 1360, it removed to the neighbouring city of Faenza.[1] A very ancient manuscript, however, would have us believe, that the Paganelli came from the town of Cunio, and that Silvestro Paganelli abandoned that locality for Faenza, where he established himself about the year 1200. Cunio was not far distant from Contignola; and it was the lordship of the Counts of the former place. The unpublished memoirs transmitted by a contemporary writer inform us, that "Stefano, third son of Vincenzo Paganelli, was a very handsome youth, gifted with much ability, extremely prudent; and that he never put his hand to anything in which (even in his early years) he did not succeed. Influenced by the Holy Spirit, this talented youth abandoned the world and its pomps, in order to consecrate himself to his Creator; and took the Dominican habit in the convent of S. Andrea in Faenza. Stefano, who changed his name for that of Domenico, was admitted into the Order on the 5th of June, 1562,[2] and he was then only seventeen years of age. As soon as he had been invested with the habit, he devoted himself to prayer and meditation,

[1] *Historia di Faenza di* Cesare Tonduzzi.

[2] This proves that Paganelli was born in 1545. Lanzi mentions a Nicoló Paganelli of Faenza, who was a painter, and a *good pupil of the Roman school.* This man may have been a near relative, or perhaps a brother of Father Domenico. He died in 1620.—V. Hist. of Painting, Bolognese School, Epoch 2nd.

fasting, and reading, as became a truly good religious. He studied in the convent of Bologna, and he preached with great benefit to the faithful in many of the convents of our Institute. He was very often elected to the dignity of Prior; but having obtained permission from his superiors, he removed to Rome—that sanctuary and asylum of arts and letters—in the year of our Lord, 1585. Here his abilities and virtues soon secured for him the patronage of Cardinal Alessandrino, then one of the most distinguished members of the sacred college. This Cardinal was greatly beloved, because he was the nephew of Pius V.; and Paganelli, during the thirteen years which he spent in his service, gave him the greatest satisfaction. In fact, the Cardinal took special pleasure in employing him as his architect, (a science which he still practises, and of which he is perfect master,) so much so, that he commissioned him to build a palace in Rome, on which his Eminence expended about sixty thousand dollars. This work succeeded to the Cardinal's great delight; and as it was a noble specimen of our friar's skill and taste, his Eminence, when dying, bequeathed him a pension of a hundred dollars, as remuneration for all his toil. Owing to the same Cardinal, and his own virtues and abilities, he received the degree of Master of Sacred Theology in Rome; and, indeed, this was a dignity to which he was justly entitled. Nor should it be forgotten that he gained the esteem of many other Cardinals, Princes, and Roman Barons. He was most intimate with Pope Innocent IX., who gave him a Canonry, then vacant in the cathedral of Faenza, which he conferred on his brother Vincenzo. In fact, this Pope would have done much more for him if he had not been too soon translated from this transitory scene to the everlasting life. He also was familiar with Cardinal

Alessandro de' Medici, who was afterwards Pope Leo XI., and who appointed him his architect. This Pontiff would have done much for him if he had lived longer. Nevertheless, when dying, he gave him a pension of a hundred dollars. This Father Domenico is still living in Rome, where he practises architecture. He is such a perfect master of this art, that many of the Cardinals and other Princes and Roman Barons, give him constant employment. He is now sixty-one years of age, and he has gained the respect and confidence of the Cardinals and Roman Barons."

From this unpublished memoir, we conclude that its anonymous author composed it in the year 1606. Tonduzzi, and the other writers of Faenza, will furnish us with matter to supply the void left by the anonymous, in the life of Paganelli; and we will thus be able to continue it through the eighteen years that he survived. Like the celebrated Fra Giocondo and Father Ignazio Danti, this religious cultivated a variety of sacred and profane studies. He was reputed one of the most distinguished mathematicians of whom Rome could boast in the seventeenth century. Nor was he less celebrated for his knowledge of divinity and dexterity in the management of the most complicated affairs. Indeed such was the high opinion of his prudence, at a period when Rome possessed a great number of the most celebrated Theologians and Canonists, that Paganelli was one of the few who composed the congregation instituted for the formation of the clergy—a reformation which was insisted on by the Council of Trent, and the necessities of the times. Nor should we omit to mention, that when Clement VIII., accompanied by his court, repaired to Ferrara, (which, at this period, had been added to the Pontifical territory,) in the year 1598, Father Paganelli was appointed to act as

Master of the Sacred Palace, till his Holiness's return.[1] But let us speak of the most important of these works, which entitle the good and learned Father to our gratitude. This is the magnificent Fountain which he constructed in his native city, to the inestimable benefit of the inhabitants, as well as the adornment of Faenza itself. Indeed, the historians of the latter place have written very minutely of this Fountain, narrating, at the same time, the causes which led to the erection of the same beautiful and useful object.[2] Tonduzzi and Scaletta, both contemporaries of Paganelli, will furnish us with the opportune notices.

In the year 1567, when Montavalente was president of the province of Romagna, the magistrates of Faenza determined to supply the people of that city with potable water, of which there was then great dearth; but such was the diversity of opinion regarding ways and means, that all these magisterial deliberations produced no result. When, however, Cardinal Guido Ferrerio da Vercelli, a man who had the interests of the people at heart, succeeded Montavalente, he resolved to aid the magistrates, nay, and to stimulate them whenever it might be necessary. For this purpose, therefore, said Cardinal convened a meeting in the year 1583, and urged the magistrates to proceed with the work of the fountain, stating at the same time, that it should be entrusted to Father Paganelli, the distinguished architect and engineer, who was their fellow-citizen, and then actually in the service of the Pope. The Cardinal's suggestion having been adopted, Father Paganelli was sent for to Rome, and on his arrival in Faenza, the authorities commissioned him to report, as to

[1] Clement VIII. left Rome, April 12, 1598, and did not return till December of the same year.

[2] Tonduzzi.

the most eligible site for the Fountain. The Father then examined the city, furnished his plan, and certified the Cardinal and magistrates of the feasibility of the undertaking.[1] Four distinguished citizens were then empowered by the magistrates, to treat with Paganelli, concerning the means for carrying on the work, and to forward it as much as possible. The names of these were Africano Severchi, Cristofero Scaletta, Cesare Nonni, and Cesare Buonacorsi. On the 15th of June, of that same year, (1583), the work was begun, and the Cardinal Legate, in order to meet the expense, caused a small tax to be laid on every *batch of white bread*, this being considered, *to be the least burdensome to the poor*.[2] After about two hundred perches of the work had been completed, at an expense of 10,500 lire, it was suspended on account of the absence of the Legate, who died in 1585. It was resumed, however, in 1589; and the magistrates ordained that the trees, which added so greatly to the beauty of the streets of the city, should be felled, in order to raise money to meet the necessary expenditure. It was also decreed, that a new tax, equivalent to a quarter of the triennial subsidy, should be imposed, and levied on the strangers as well as citizens; and that certain sums lodged to the credit of the state, should be disbursed for the public utility. Notwithstanding all this, fully twenty-four years passed by, before the undertaking was prosecuted; but as soon as Cardinal Rivarola was appointed to

[1] The beautiful fountain of Perugia is the work of another religious, named Guido, a Silvestrine *Monk*, who conveyed the water into the city from Monte Paciano, a distance of two miles. Niccolo and Giovanni of Pisa, adorned this fountain with choicest sculptures, which were restored in the sixteenth century, by Vincenzo Danti, brother of Fra Ignazio.

[2] Tonduzzi Loc. cit.

the Legatine office by Paul V., (A.D. 1614,) the works were vigorously forwarded, and speedily advanced to perfection. Need we say, that this remarkable undertaking reflected great honour on Paganelli, or that it gave satisfaction to the citizens? Let us now hear Scaletta, one of the deputies, describing how the Engineer, accomplished his task.

"The architect's first care, in the construction of this fabric, was to visit attentively all the sites in the neighbourhood of the city, particularly in the southern quarter, from which all the waters that irrigate the territory come, in order to ascertain which of them was best suited to hold water enough for said fountain: and having pitched on a spot about two miles and a-half south of the city, in a place called Orvella, not far from the high road that leads to Brisighella, he declared it to be an excellent site wherein to form a reservoir for receiving all the streams of the neighbouring hills, which were quite sufficient to give an unfailing supply to said fountain. Moreover, the level character of the soil greatly facilitated the conveyance of the water, and indeed there was no necessity of carrying the duct over canals or rivers, and this greatly lessened the difficulties our Engineer had to encounter. After repeated experiments, he finally satisfied himself that this was the most eligible site. Here he caused a well of great depth to be dug, in order to collect as much water as would give a perpetual supply to the fountain. In fact all the streamlets of the neighbouring hills flow into this well, and when the mass of the water is sufficient, it naturally rises and passes through various openings into another receptacle, which is called the first basin. Here commences the grand duct through which the water is conveyed into the public piazza of the

city, where it forms these mimic cataracts, so worthy of the bizarre genius of the artist."[1]

Having succeeded, our engineer's next thought was, how he should best maintain a perpetual supply of water, and compensate for all losses. This he effected with that cleverness and inventive skill which are the predicates of every man who is thoroughly conversant with his art. The most learned architects and engineers have not failed to commend Father Paganelli's work, and time that deals so unsparingly with all that the hand of man produces, has set the seal of its approbation on this structure, which is of such vast utility to the city of Faenza. If the engineer has thus shown himself to be intimately conversant with hydraulics, he has also proved that he was not less skilful in the design of the fountain, which, though its dimensions be not great, is nevertheless extremely elegant. It may be described thus: Enclosed within an iron railing, are three great lions, (the armorial devices of the city,) and sundry eagles and dragons cast in bronze, from the mouths of which, (as well as from other parts of their bodies), the water spirts up in jets, and then falls into a marble basin below, which also receives the many mimic streams that rise and descend through a leaden pipe, which is placed in the centre of an upper basin. Outside the iron railing, and opposite to each other are two smaller fountains, each of which is furnished with a marble reservoir for the use of the citizens. This wonderful work, according to Righi, was not finished till 1617.[2]

It is very likely that Paganelli made repeated journies from Rome to his native city, while this work was in progress; for, indeed, our engineer desired to close his days in his natal place. He therefore fixed his abode in

[1] Scaletta, Il Fonte di Faenza. [2] Annal. di Faenza.

Faenza, *and expended all the money he had received from Popes, Cardinals, and Roman princes on the erection of many fabrics, and on the rebuilding and enlargement of the convent of S. Andrea, of which he was a member; and an ancient inscription*[1] *would lead us to believe that he rebuilt said convent from the very foundations.* Magnani informs us, that the choir of the church was restored by Paganelli, and that the chapel del Rosario was decorated according to his designs. *Being wholly devoted to the welfare of his Order, he laid out all the money paid him by the citizens of Faenza for the fountain, on the purchase of a villa, which he bequeathed to his convent.* The people of Forli, having requested him to furnish a design for a chapel in their cathedral; he readily acquiesced, and according to Paolo Bonoli, produced the plan of the beautiful chapel (in the Corinthian order) called *La Madonna del Fuoco.*[2] This chapel was wisely preserved, at the period when the cathedral was thrown down, for indeed it would have been difficult to erect any thing of the sort, richer or more elegant.

Having now attained his seventy-ninth year, Father Paganelli passed into eternal rest on the 23rd of March, 1624. The community of S. Andrea, amongst whom he drew his last breath, desiring to commemorate the many and important services which he had rendered them, raised an affectionate monument to him in the first cloister of their convent. This monument is decorated with his bust, modelled in clay, and represents him wearing the insignia of a doctor, and holding a scroll in

[1] *Hoc. D. Andreae Coenobium a fundamentis extructo, etc.*

[2] History of Forli, ad. an. 1619. "*The building which excelled all the others we have mentioned, was that which was commenced in this year, namely, the chapel of the Madonna del Fuoco (of the Fire). It was highly decorated with gold, silver, and marbles, and it was designed by the Dominican Father, Paganelli, who was the Pope's architect.*"

his right hand. An ample inscription, which we subjoin, narrates the principal facts in the life of this learned and illustrious Dominican.[1]

Paganelli has been briefly mentioned by Michele Pio, Francesco Milizia, the historians of Faenza, and particularly by the celebrated Abbot of Camaldoli, Benedetto Mittarelli, who tells us that this distinguished Dominican left many works on these sciences, which he cultivated so lovingly. This, however, is all that we know of them.[2]

[1] DOMINICO. PAGANELLIO. FAVENTINO. ORD. PRAED. SACRAE. THEOLOGIAE. MAGISTRO. ROMANA. CURIA. FERRARIAE. COMMORANTE. CUM. PONTIFICE. CLEMENTE VIII. SACRI. PALATII. MAGISTRO. IN. URBE. USQUE. AD. REDITUM. SURROGATO. OB. EJUS. PERSPICACIAM. IN. REFORMATIONIS. CONGREGATIONEM. COOPTATO. MATHEMATICIS. PRAETEREA. CELEBRI. ARCHITECTURA. LONGE PRAESTANTI. CUJUS. IN. REM. DIU. ROMAE. DETENTUS. A. CARD. ALEXANDRINO. ALIISQUE. PURPURATIS. TUM. A. SUMMIS. PONTIFICIB. INNOCENTIO IX. CLEMENTE VIII. LEONE XI. ET. PAULO V EX. EODEM. USU. MUNERIB. AUCTUS. DEMUM. SENEX. IN PATRIA. REDUX. HOC. D. ANDREAE. COENOBIUM. A. FUNDAMENTIS. EXTRUCTO. CHORO. CISTERNA. DORMITORIAE. PORTICUS. FORNICE. AROMATARIA. OFFICINA. ADJUNCTISQUE. CUBICULIS. AUXIT. IPSE. PECUNIA. VIRTUTIBUS. PARTA. FONTEM. AERE. PUBLICO. DUXIT. RELIQUIT. QUO. PRATENSIS. VILLA. COENOBIO. QUAESITA. EST F. MAG. SERAPHINUS. DE. ARGENTA. PRIOR. AC. FRATRES. RELIQUI. GRATI. ANIMI. MONUMENTUM. P. P. VIXIT. AN. LXXIX. OBIIT. X. KAL. MART. CIↃCXXIV.

[2] De Literatura Faventinorum.

CHAPTER XIX.

Father Giovanni Battista Mayno, the Spanish Painter, and Father Jean Andrè, a French Painter.

The seventeenth century, so fatal to the arts, literature, and morals of the Italians, beheld all the traditions of Christian Art fading away one after the other, and that same century witnessed the apostacy of painting, which, after having abjured its high and holy office of civil and religious instructress, thenceforth sought to derive its inspirations from the Pagan Olympus. Then, indeed, it seemed as though the generality of artists had no earthly home, and cared little for that which is "beyond the skies." And, in fact, nothing can be more absurd than to attempt to develope religious subjects on canvas or in marble, if the painter and sculptor be not solicitous to realise the grand object of Christian Art, or if the result of his labours be at variance with it. Surely we are not bound to recognise certain figures as apostles or eremites, simply because the artist may have draped them in serge or in the skin of the wild beast. Far otherwise, we will never give such designation to the former, till we behold their features beaming with the supernal brightness of that charity which made them the joy and the blessing of mankind; and as to the latter, we will never pronounce them to be what the painter or sculptor would have us believe, till we can read on their countenances the ecstacy of souls whose devotion raises them above this transitory scene, thus associating them by anticipation with the choirs of the elect. Having fallen from such an altitude, it was only from time to time that painting deigned to bestow a hasty and furtive glance on these

cloisters, where it had found its earliest refuge, and where its infancy was nursed, and from which it went forth in all the splendour of maturity. Wherefore, as this period dates the extinction of the long line of Dominican painters in Italy, we must needs leave our own sunny shores and travel into distant regions, in order to fill up the void which that ill-omened century has caused in our artistic history.[1]

Spain presents to us, in the person of Father Giovanni Battista Mayno, a painter whose merits entitle him to a distinguished niche in the pinacoteca of our artists. Had we been able to collect more copious notices of him, we would have endeavoured to make our readers better acquainted with this Dominican; but we must content ourselves with these few facts which have been given by the Marquis Montecuccoli, who has recently published a brief but well written history of Spanish painting.[2]

Among the many distinguished disciples whom Dome-

[1] We should not be understood as saying, that no Dominican cultivated painting in Italy during the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries, but rather that those who devoted themselves to this art in the said period, rarely rose above mediocrity. We may observe, moreover, that two of our religious who had some celebrity as painters, flourished in the convent of Fiesole at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The first of these was Father Santi Tosini, whom some have confounded with the blessed Angelico, who lived two hundred years before him. The second was a lay-brother, named Fra Giovanni da Firenze, concerning whom the conventual Chronicle gives us the following particulars:—"Ann. 1606, *Father Nicholas Pandulfini, the head-sacristan, caused an altar and an armory to be constructed for the oratory of the sacristy. On said armory there was a painting in oil, which represented the Annunciation; and, as an adornment to the altar, he caused other armories to be made, containing pictures of the passion, on the outer side of the doors. The inside of the doors was decorated with portraits of S. Romolo and S. Antonino. All these paintings were executed by the hand of Brother John de Florentia, a lay-brother of this monastery.*" At present there is no remains of any work by either of these painters.

[2] *Storia della Pittura in Ispagna dal Risorgimento fino ai nostri Giorni.*

nico Theotocopuli (a Greek painter and sculptor, and pupil of Tiziano) bequeathed to Spain, where he had fixed his abode, was Father Mayno, concerning whose birth-place and social position we know nothing. It is certain, however, that he was born in 1569. Like Fra Bartolommeo della Porta, he did not take the habit till he was somewhat advanced in years, nor have we ascertained where or when he entered the cloister. Our earliest notice of him dates so far back as 1611, and represents him as being then a very able artist, and employed to paint a history of S. Ildefenso, in the sacristy of the cathedral of Toledo. At the same period he painted the Circumcision of Our Lord in a cloister of the same cathedral. King Philip IV., who, in his boyhood, had studied painting under Father Mayno, was at all times influenced by our Dominican in the various commissions which he entrusted to artists; and in this respect our painter was highly useful to those who practised that profession. As Theotocopuli, or rather the *Greek*, the name by which he was usually designated, had introduced the Venetian style into Spain, the manner followed by Father Mayno greatly resembled that of Paolo Veronese; and Montecuccoli adds, that he was very fertile in invention, well versed in chiaroscuro, chaste in design, and bold and free in his pencilling. His best works are:—the grand altar-piece in S. Marco, and these in the churches of S. Bartolommeo and S. Peter Martyr, in Toledo. He also painted a Christ lying dead in the arms of the Eternal Father, and this is now in the possession of the Discalced Carmelites in Talavera de la Rejna. For the convent of the Dominicans in Salamanca he executed a picture of our holy Founder. For the church of his confreres in Toledo, he painted four pictures and two angels, which were placed over the lateral sepulchres of said church;

and also an historical piece representing the conquest of Brazil, by D. Fabrique of Toledo. The last-named work is now in the Buenritiro at Madrid. We have not discovered whether he bequeathed to his Order any pupil to whom he taught the art. He died in 1646, after having attained his seventy-seventh year.

Spain produced two other Dominican painters, Fra Francesco da Figueroa and Fra Michele Pasados,[1] but they were so obscure, that nothing save their names has survived them.

Far more copious are the notices of the life and works of Father Jean André, the French painter, who brings our Memoirs down to the eighteenth century. This man was born in Paris in 1662. We know nothing of his boyhood, or of his parents, but we find that he took the habit of the Preaching-Friars, at the age of seventeen, in one of the two convents (S. Jacques and S. Onoré) which the Order possessed in Paris at that period. The superiors perceiving that this youth had a decided taste for painting, instead of making him a theologian or a preacher, very wisely determined to give him an artistic education. And herein they evinced their wisdom, for nothing can be more injudicious than to thwart and mar one's natural tendency; and, indeed, we might easily show how nature avenges herself for such violence. Alas! for the fatuity of these superiors who succeed in uprooting the germs of early genius. Many and many a name, now shrouded in obscurity, would have shone on the historic page, if indiscreet and short-sighted men had not laboured to turn aspiring youth from that path which nature had destined it

[1] Montecuccoli says, that Father Michele Pasados, belonged to the province of Aragon, where he was born in 1711. He died in 1753. There are some paintings by him in the Dominican Convent of Valenza.

to tread. Andre's preceptors, therefore, sent him to Rome, that he might perfect himself by studying the wonderful works of Raffaello and Michelangiolo in the Vatican. When he arrived in Italy, the Roman School was divided into two factions, which disputed pertinaciously for the ascendency in painting. They were, in sooth, the Marius and Sylla, or if you will, the Guelfs and Ghibellines of their period. In Naples, they would have resorted to the stiletto; but in Rome, they contented themselves with heaping all manner of invective on each other. One of these factions—that of the Cortonese—was led by Ciro Ferri; and the other—that of Andrea Sacchi—was marshalled by Carlo Maratta.[1] The first carried off the palm in fresco-painting. The second ruled supreme in oil-painting; and if Ciro Ferri's disciples triumphed in number as well as in fecundity, these of Carlo Maratta may be said to have excelled them in the exquisite finish of their compositions. But as Ciro Ferri died in 1689, Carlo Maratta assumed the dictatorship of art, and being sustained by *Clement XI. who had studied painting under him*, he was ultimately appointed to direct all the paintings which were then in progress in Rome and Urbino. Our André, seeing that the Maratta faction had triumphed, determined to espouse the manner of the victors, a resolve which, in our judgment, was detrimental to art and to his own fame. Having returned to France, he brought with him these prave maxims which he had learned in Italy. His character as a rapid and imaginative painter soon procured him very numerous commissions; and the earliest productions of his pencil were devoted to a con-

[1] Carlo Maratta painted the portrait of the celebrated Irish Franciscan, Father Luke Wadding, who wrote the immense work entitled "Annales Minorum." The original portrait (which has been admirably engraved) is in the convent of S. Isidoro, Rome.

vent which the Dominicans had just then obtained in the *Rue de Bac*. His confreres being highly delighted with his works, immediately engaged him to paint all the pictures of the transept and chapels of the church of S. Onorè. These pictures represented some passages of our Lord's Passion; and he also executed some likenesses of the Saints of his Order Whilst engaged at these works, he was frequently visited by the celebrated painters, Hosse and Jouvenet; and, indeed, he imitated the style of the latter so admirably, that some of his productions seem as though they had been retouched by this far-famed artist. Andre's ability was now bruited abroad, and the French Dominicans charged him to execute numerous paintings. These of Lyons, in particular, besought him to paint a picture of large dimensions for them, and he thereon produced the Pharisee's Feast, which, for a long time, adorned the refectory of their convent. We have not ascertained where this work is at present. For his confreres of Bordeaux he painted two large pictures, one of which represents the Marriage in Cana, and the other the Multiplication of the loaves. The excellent Society of S. Vincent de Paul commissioned him to execute some works for their Church of S. Lazarre, and he gladly undertook to paint some passages in the life of their Founder. He, therefore, produced two paintings, one of which represents S. Vincent, preaching in the hospital of the Holy Name, (which he built from the foundations,) and the other the crowning of the Saint in the kingdom of the Blessed. These two works were engraved by Herisset, Carle, and Du Pin. The French biographer who has given us these notices of Andrè extols the composition of his paintings, and praises the correctness of their design, although it is not grandiose, but rather partaking of

Maratta's style. He describes him as elegant in the clothing of his figures, although the folds of his draperies cannot be said to be facile or natural. His colouring, continues the same authority, is lively and vigorous; and in this particular he approaches the celebrated Jouvenet. From all this we conclude, that this artist, (had he been born in another age, and placed under other masters,) would have revived the examples of Fra Bartolommeo della Porta, and of Father Maraveja. Amongst his minor paintings, we may mention an Adoration of the Magi, which he executed for the Theatines of Paris; a Nativity of our Lord, and a Holy Family for the church of the Bon Pasteur; a Deposition from the Cross for the parochial church of Epinay; and, finally, a S. Genevieve, which was meant to be placed in a chapel belonging to the Dominicans. This last work he executed when he had attained his ninetieth year. His portraits of private citizens are remarkable for their truth and beautiful tinting. Having won such renown, he might easily have had himself numbered amongst the members of the French Academy, but he set little value on titles; and like a really modest man, regarded such an honour as incompatible with that humility which he professed and practised.[1] He died in Paris, A.D. 1753, aged ninety-one years. Taraval, who was first painter to the king of Sweden, was a disciple of this Dominican. Dumont, commonly called il *Romano*, who was subsequently Director of the French Academy of painting, studied under him, as did also Chasle, a painter famed for his knowledge of perspective, and who was decorated with the Cordon Noir.

[1] *Dictionnaire Historique Critique et Bibliographique*, Paris, 1810, Tom. i. p. 139.

With these brief memoranda of Fathers Mayno and Andrè, we flatter ourselves that we have discharged our obligations to Spain and France, fully convinced that many distinguished artists, in every branch, flourished in the cloisters of these two powerful nations. We have to regret the absence of these historical notices, which would have enabled us to write copiously of them. Nor will I omit to mingle my sorrow with that of the entire Dominican Order, for the loss it has recently sustained by the demise of Father Louis Piel, the French architect, who, although but a young man, gave promise of a glorious future. Had it pleased Providence to spare him, he would have restored Christian Architecture in his native land, and he would have reflected additional honor on the Dominican Institute, by his study and cultivation of an art which it lovingly cherished even in the earliest moments of its existence.[1]

[1] See M. Teyssier's *Notice Biographique sur Louis-Alexandre Piel, nè à Lisieux le 20 aout*, 1808, *mort a Bosco, en Piémont, religieux de l'ordre de Saint Dominique, le 19 Decembre*, 1841. *Un vol. grand in 8.*

CHAPTER XX.

Father Vincenzo Maculano, Cardinal of Holy Church; and some othe Architects, and Civil and Military Engineers.

We think that we ought to close these Memoirs, whicl comprise a cycle of five centuries, with the names o Cardinal Vincenzo Maculano, and of some other archi tects and military engineers, who either devoted them selves heart and soul to the defence of their native land or employed all the talents which God had given then for its splendour and adornment. Thus as the artisti history of the Preaching-Friars commenced with sacre architecture, it must terminate with the branches of th same science, known as civil and military, since God an Father-land are the sublimest objects of this art. But i anybody should object to us that such studies ar not compatible with the pacific, or rather contem plative state of the cloister life, or if it should be urge that men who addict themselves to such pursuits mus necessarily frequent the camp and battle-field in time o war, and the assemblies of the people in time of peace, w will answer that there is no condition of persons, no matte how sacred and venerable, which is not commanded t love the land of their birth, and to arm for its defen when such necessity arises. In fact, history gives us grand exemplification of this in the person of Po Julius the second, who in his eightieth year girded armour, and in the depth of winter placed himself at t head of his troops in order to drive the barbarians out Italy. This Pontiff felt himself obliged to defend h native land, and to bless it; and he doubtless held th these two duties were as pious as they were stringent.

The Dominican Historians who have chronicled the life and works of Cardinal Vincenzo Maculano describe him as an exemplar of all the virtues which should adorn the character of a religious, nay, they inform us that he possessed an immense amount of sacred and profane learning; but they have not cared to tell us that he was celebrated for his profound knowledge of mathematics, and of civil and military architecture. In fact such was his familiarity with the latter branches, that his name has been invariably associated with these of Sammicheli Marchi, Cataneo, Lantieri and others. This silence on their part, and the absence of authentic documents, will not allow us to treat of this eminent personage as we would wish. Nevertheless we will do our utmost to throw light on the life of the illustrious Cardinal.

Vincenzo Maculano was born on the 11th of September, 1578, in Firenzuola, a village situated on the confines of Tuscany and Romagna. At the age of sixteen he took the Dominican habit, in the City of Pavia, where he made such proficiency in sacred and profane learning, that he soon outstripped all his compeers, and gave promise that he would one day become a most distinguished man. In fact, he was soon elected to fill some of the most distinguished offices of his Order; and such was his prudence that he was often chosen to adjudicate on public and private affairs, which were involved in doubt and difficulty. He was for some time Inquisitor in Pavia; and he filled that office at a subsequent period, (1627,) in Genoa, where he was destined to display his wonderful knowledge of military fortifications.

Carlo Emanuele, Duke of Savoy, had for a long time been planning the capture of the Republican City of Genoa, nor did he pretermit any opportunity that might throw said city into his grasp. So intent was he on the

destruction of the liberties of this republic, that he did not shrink from arming the parricidal hand of an infamous traitor, named Giulio Cesare Vachero, who, with others, conspired to ruin his unhappy Father-land. The conspiracy having failed, the citizens inflicted condign punishment on the modern Catiline, and it was then that Carlo Emanuele resorted to open violence. Having formed an alliance with France, the French general Lesdighieres, was despatched with forces to assist him and the two armies after having desolated the neighbouring country, sat down before hapless Genoa. Heaven however, watched over the republic; for as the Duke and Lesdighieres had begun to differ about their plan (or it may be that the latter had been bribed,) they delayed making the assault till the Genoese were reinforced by Spanish subsidies, on the arrival of which, the Savoy and French forces abandoned their design.[1] It was during this war (which was all but fatal to the Ligurian Capital) that Maculano gave such signal proof of his love of native-land. Genoa was protected on the land-side by a triple wall; but the hills which command it, were quite unfurnished with any defences, and despite their ruggedness, afforded an excellent position for light troops, who could easily seize it, and pour down their fire on the people manning the walls. The citizens, fully aware of their danger and animated by a true spirit of patriotism, promptly applied themselves to remedy the evil; and they determined on raising a fourth wall. On the 7th of December, 1627, the Doge, Jacopo Lomellini, accompanied by the clergy, confraternities, and electoral colleges, proceeded in great state, to lay the first stone and this marvellous work, commenced only in 1630, was

[1] Carlo Botta, *Storia d' Italia*, lib. XX. E. XXI.

finished in the brief term of two years! Ten thousand men laboured night and day at this wall, the construction of which, was superintended by the most experienced engineers and architects of that period, one of whom was our Fra Vincenzo Maculano. Whilst this work was progressing every other was suspended, and all the citizens contributed to meet the expenses. The Colleges, the noble house of S. Giorgio, Notaries, Doctors, Artists, and the Clergy of all Orders, cheerfully furnished means for this patriotic undertaking. A single sermon preached by a Carmelite Friar, produced one hundred thousand lire. The Genoese, in their zeal to raise this wall, scattered gold as though it were the sand of their sea shore;[1] and this girdle of stone cost them ten millions of their currency.

We will take the description of this work in which Maculano performed such a distinguished part, from Botta's History. "The work was to be wrought out of the living stone. They levelled the all but adamantine inequalities, by means of mines, pick-axes, and chisels. The site was exceedingly craggy, and presented great obstacles to the building of fortifications; nevertheless such was the industry and perseverance of the workmen, and such the zeal of the superintendents, that they ultimately succeeded in shaping curtains, ramparts, bastions, and fosses, out of these intractable masses; you would have thought that they had to work at the most plastic material. Wherever the rocky nature of the soil left interstices, they filled them up with masonry which almost equalled nature's most impregnable work. Whenever any of the labourers tired or lagged, it was scarcely necessary to mention the *Duke of Savoy*, and that

[1] Davidde Bertolotti Viaggio nella Liguria Marittima.

name roused and stimulated them to more vigorous exertion; thus did they toil on the hills and the slopes; nor were they less industrious in the interior part of this wall, for they constructed an ambulatory (within it) fully sixty feet wide, and in every respect fitted for the movement of heavy guns, as well as for the accommodation of the troops appointed to work them. The greatest danger, however, was to be feared in the direction of the valley of Bisagno, where the site is more regular, and less precipitous; but they soon provided the opportune defences for this quarter, and constructed double ramparts with their embrasures, covered-ways, and half moons. The whole work was greatly strengthened by two little natural elevations, which, projecting like two horns, commanded the plain below, and afforded ample room for the working of the guns, which were thus in a position to open their fire on either side. These fortifications rendered Genoa almost impregnable on the land-side and assaultable only from the sea."

In 1629 Maculano left Genoa, in order to attend to some matters of gravest urgency; and immediately after said date, Pope Urban VIII., *who was not only an encourager of learned men, but made it his particular business to promote them according to their merits*, being fully convinced of the integrity and prudence of our friar, invited him to Rome and appointed him *Procurator-General* of the Dominican Institute, in the Curia Romana. At this period, the General of the Order had to proceed to France on business of importance; and during his absence Maculano was deputed to fill his place in Rome. In 1632 Urban VIII. named him Commissary-General of the Roman Inquisition, and in 1639 Master of the Sacred Palace. Thus did the Pontiff evince his high esteem for this religious, in whom he placed so much confidence

In fact, it was easy to perceive that his holiness intended to raise him to the cardinalitial dignity. Maculano, meanwhile, was commissioned to execute various works of civil and religious architecture, concerning which, owing to the loss of ancient records, we possess only very meagre notices. We know, however, that he repaired the fortifications of the Castello Urbano, in the Bolognese territory, as well as these of "Adrian's Mole," commonly called Castel Sant' Angelo; and that he restored that portion of the city wall which surrounds the Vatican.[1] Nor were these his only works, for at this period the Turks were threatening to seize the island of Malta; and as it was necessary to strengthen its defences, the Inquisitor Chigi (afterwards Pope Alexander VII.) memorialed the Pontiff, at the request of the knights, to send thither some skilful engineer in order to restore the old fortifications and construct new ones. The Pontiff thereon commissioned Pietro Paolo Floriani to proceed to the island, but as the Maltese Knights were not satisfied with the works executed by him, he was succeeded by Maculano, who was charged by the Holy See to provide everything necessary for the security of such an important garrison.[2] On his return to Rome, Urban VIII. thought it time to reward him for these services by which he had won universal applause and esteem; *and he, therefore, created him Cardinal and Archbishop of Benevento*, on the 16th of December, 1641. After having spent sixteen months

[1] Fontana, *Theatr. Dominic.* Echard, on the authority of Rovetta, attributes various works on mathematics and military architecture to Maculano; these, however, are unpublished. He also says that our learned friar gave ample descriptions and designs of the works to which we have alluded.—Scriptor. Ord. Prædic., v. 2, p. 623.

[2] Pallavicino, *Vita di Alessandro VII.* Touron, *Histoire des Hommes illustres de l'Ordre de S. Dominique*, tom v.

governing his diocese, he was recalled to Rome by Pope Urban, who wished to avail himself of the Cardinal's advice and suggestions, nay, and of his genius as an architect. Wherefore, as his Eminence found that he could not attend to the affairs of the archbishopric, he delivered this high dignity into the hands of him who had conferred it. On two occasions, Maculano was very near having a decided majority in the conclave. The first of these was when the Cardinals assembled to elect a successor to Urban VIII., who died on the 29th of July, 1644. *At this period a single additional vote would have raised this man, so distinguished as a mathematician, engineer, and architect, to the highest of all earthly dignities.* The second occasion was after the death of Pope Innocent X., who deceased on the 7th of January, 1655; but it may be as well to say nothing of the influences which excluded Maculano from the papacy at this period.[1] At length the Lord called the Cardinal out of this life on the 15th of February, 1665, after he had attained his eighty-eighth year; and we deem it almost superfluous to state, that he left behind him the name and fame of a man who was not only remarkable for his learning, but also a zealous minister of the sanctuary, and one of the most distinguished military engineers of his period.

We will now speak of Father Antonio Ambrogini, for the notices of whose life we are indebted to Father Federico di Poggio, the historian and librarian of S. Romano di Lucca. This writer collected many facts relating to this military engineer, from a person who

[1] As these two Popes (Urban VIII. and Innocent X.) are intimately identified with the religious and *political* history of Ireland in the seventeenth century, the reader is referred to *Rinuccini's* "*Nunziatura in Irlanda*," a work which is replete with the greatest interest.

dwelt for a long time with Ambrogini in said convent di S. Romano.

Father Antonio Ambrogini, was born in the populous district of Diecimo, in the territory of Lucca. When but a mere stripling, he resolved to take the Dominican habit, and desiring, perhaps, to embrace a state in which he would have an opportunity of practising the most rigid austerity, he affiliated himself to the Province of S. Catherine, in the Abbruzzo, where there then flourished a community of Dominicans, far-famed for their sanctity. After finishing his theological course he applied himself to the study of mathematics and military engineering, for which he possessed decided taste and ability. It is told of him that he walked from the Abbruzzo to Vienna, at the period when that city was besieged, in order to inspect the celebrated fortifications. Indeed, this is a convincing proof of his enthusiastic love of these pursuits. When his name became known, the Duke of Modena appointed him his engineer; and, although we have not ascertained the precise period in which this occurred, we may suppose that he then affiliated himself to the convent of Modena. From the service of the Duke he passed to that of the Republic of Lucca. The magistrates of this city appointed him their mathematician and engineer, and particularly in the department of hydraulics.[1]

Amongst the many valuable services which he rendered to his country, we may mention the mathematical school

[1] In the Public Book of the fortifications of *Lucca*, we find the following entry:—"Father Ambrogini, the Dominican, was confirmed in his office and re-elected by the Council of Lucca to fill the place of Engineer to said Republic for the next three years, with a salary of ten dollars per month. He is obliged to teach mathematics to such of the youth as may wish to study under him, and he is *also bound to superintend the fortifications*," etc.

which he founded, and which sent forth many very celebrated engineers, surveyors, etc. Nor did he fail to leave us many monuments of his genius. Some say that he built the beautiful bridge of S. Pietro, which spans the Serchio; but there are some who doubt this. There are at present in the library of the convent of S. Romano at Lucca, two quinterns of reports, by this Father. One of these contains a number of letters addressed to the persons appointed to superintend the works on the river; and the other gives us a valuable report relating to the Serchio. The letters are dated from 1699 to 1700; and they, as well as the report, are manifest evidences of Ambrogini's profound skill in such matters.

His compatriots preserve a beautiful geographical chart of the territory of Diecimo, which this Father executed with a pen: this he dedicated to Cardinal Buonvisi. Of the same character was another chart of the Milanese State, which was preserved in the family of the Jacopi.[1] Father Federico di Poggio says, that he had these charts in his possession for a considerable period. Father Ambrogini died in his natal-place on the 17th of August 1722, aged sixty-seven. Many other valuable remains of this Father have been lost. It is said that he was as much given to melancholy as he was to study; and that he was always absorpt in profoundest meditations.

We will now expend a few words on some other artificers, fearing we might be termed ingrates were we to overlook them. The first, therefore, shall be the Flemish architect and engineer, Father Francesco Rimain, commonly called *Il Frate Romano*. He was born in Gand, A.D. 1646. I know not at what period he took

[1] It bears the following inscription :—"The State of Milan divided into its parts by F. A. Ambrogini of Diecimo, of the Order of Preaching-Friars, 169[illegible]

the Dominican habit; but it would appear that he applied himself zealously to the study of mathematics and architecture. As soon as he had established his reputation, the States-General of Holland employed him (1684) to build an arch of the bridge of Maestricht. At a subsequent period he must have executed very many beautiful works in his native land, for we are informed that Louis XIV., king of France, a great patron of artists and literary men, having heard of our friar's ability, invited him to Paris, and charged him to complete the Pont Royal which had been commenced by Gabriel. Father Romain finished this work to the king's most perfect satisfaction, and thus merited the title of Royal Architect, Inspector of Bridges, etc. When we consider the number of eminent men that France possessed at this period, we must admit that the regal honours conferred on our friar are the clearest proofs of his skill and profound knowledge. The historian who has given us these few notices of F. Romain, says, that he was a man of most exemplary life, and that he consecrated his heart and soul to religion and art. He closed his days in Paris, in 1735, aged eighty-nine.[1]

Nor should we forget to mention Fra Pietro Paolo Belli, the architect, with whose name we bring our Memoirs down to the present century. The city of Jesi, in the Marches of Ancona, was the natal-place of this Dominican lay-brother. We have not ascertained the year of his birth or of his religious investment. Some notices sent to us from Romagna state, that he directed all the restorations in the church of his confreres in Ancona, though he did not furnish the design. The memoranda of the Convent of Pesaro state that Belli was

[1] Dictionnaire Historique, Critique, et Bibliographique, tom. vii., p. 153.

domiciled in that city in 1790. In 1791 he restored various fabrics belonging to the Dominicans of Pesaro; and three years after said date, he likewise restored the church degli Angioli in Novillara. When Father Paolo Lastrico was prior of the convent of Pesaro, the religious determined to erect a new church, and they charged Belli to build it. Wherefore, having furnished a design which pleased his employers, he immediately set about raising the walls. In 1797, however, Belli was obliged to abandon the work, as the revolutionary doings of the period, had filled the peninsula with anarchy and desolation. When the times changed, the Dominicans resumed possession of the Pesarese Convent, and Belli, at the instance of Father Vincenzo Camurati, then superior, recommenced the building in 1806. The whole was finished in the September of 1806, and in the following year the good lay-brother passed into eternal rest.

Some architects who flourished in the seventeenth century, and whom we have reluctantly omitted on account of the penury of the notices regarding them, should at least be mentioned in these pages. There was, for example, Father Domenico Paglia, who furnished the design of the rich chapel, sacred to our Founder, in the Minerva at Rome. He also designed the grand piazza opposite to the bridge of S. Antonio in the city of Sanseverino in the Marches of Ancona. After him we may mention Father Domenico Peparelli, to whom some attribute the Bonelli Palace (now called Imperiali) in the Piazza of the Santi Apostoli at Rome; a palace which Milizia, a most severe critic, pronounces to be a *good and well proportioned architecture*.[1] This architect

[1] Mem. degli architetti antichi etc. vol. ii. I believe, however, that Father Paganelli was the architect of this palace.

is barely glanced at by Passeri and Milizia, in the life of Martino Longhi, and simply for the sake of a pleasing anecdote which may be found in these two biographies.[1] In that same century flourished two other architects, the one named Fra Giovanni da Palermo, and the other, Fra Giovanni Buonvisi. The former restored the church of the Dominicans in Sanseverino; and the latter furnished the design, and superintended the restoration of S. Romano in Lucca.[2] We should also make honourable mention of Father Agostino del Riccio, the author of a History of Stones, which is still unpublished. This work was not only praised by Gori and Cicognara but was of the greatest service to the former, when writing his grand treatise entitled "*Dactiliotheca Smithiana*." It is written in the most terse style, and despite some useless digressions, it must be of the greatest utility to the studious of this branch of Art.[3]

Amongst those celebrated for works executed with the pen, we may mention Father Benedetto Greyss, a man of German family, but born in Leghorn. So famed was he for works in this style, that the Emperor and Grand Duke Francis I., commissioned him in 1750 to

[1] Passeri Vite dei Pittori etc. che sono morti dal 1641 al 1673.

[2] The restorations of the church of S. Romano di Lucca were commenced 1661, and finished in 1666. v. *Notizie della Libreria dei Padri Domenicani di S. Romano in Lucca.*

[3] "*History of Stones written about the year* 1597, *by Father Agostino del Riccio, a Florentine, of the Order of S. Dominic, with the figures of the same painted by Vincenzo Dosi,*" 1 *vol. folio. Another copy, with some variations, is now in the possession of Molini the publisher, in Florence. This history mentions another work by the same religious, on Fruits, Flowers, and Herbs. Echard and Quietif have not spoken of this writer. Riccio died in* 1798, *and his portrait may be seen in the grand cloister of S. M. Novella, in the fresco, painted by Baldini, representing the transit of S. Dominic. The Father is pourtrayed in the act of sprinkling holy water on the Saint. This is all that we have been able to collect from the Necrology regarding the learned Dominican.*

make small copies of all the paintings in the Gallery of the Uffizj in Florence. I know not what became of this immense work; but, beyond doubt, it reflected the greatest honour on him, and obtained for him the privilege of having his own portrait placed in the same Gallery amongst these of the most distinguished painters of Europe.[1] Antecedently to Father Benedetto, Florence was justly proud of two other celebrated pensmen, Cantagallina and Mati; but neither of them attained to such excellence or diligence as Greyss. Every one knows how great was the celebrity which the two Bolognese painters, Bartolommeo Passerotti and Agostino Caracci had won by the exercise of this art; and it is scarcely necessary to say that the latter practised it much in order to become the excellent engraver which he really was. Greyss likewise addicted himself to the burin, but the only engraving of his known to me, is the portrait of Cardinal Albertino di Prato, copied after that of Simone Memmi, in the great chapel of the Spaniards in S. Maria Novella.

I dare not omit mentioning the Dominican paintress, Sister Anna Vittoria Dolara, a nun of the monastery of S. M. Magdalene on Monte Cavallo in Rome. She was, in sooth, a highly gifted woman, remarkable alike for her piety, for her poetical abilities, and for her excellence in painting and miniaturing. When the French troops carried off Pope Pius VI., and expelled the inmates of the cloisters, they spared the convent of

[1] Greyss executed his own portrait with a pen, and represented himself holding a scroll which bears this inscription:—

Fr. Benedictus Vin. De. Greyss. Ord. Prædicat. Theologus, Patri Libernensis, origine Germanus, ab imperatore Cæsare Francisco Lotheringio Pio, Felice, Augusto, tabulis pictis signis anaglyptis, quæ in regio Cimeliarco Florentiæ asservantur, calamo delineandis præpositus, sua se ipsum manu effinixit anno salutis 1758.

[2] Lanzi, Bolognese School, 2nd Epoch.

S. Mary Magdelene, moved to pity, no doubt, by the many virtues of its poor and observant sisterhood. Nevertheless they deprived them of all means of subsistence; thus proving themselves at one and the same time merciless and merciful. The good Dolara *plied her pencil night and day, and thus, as well as by the alms which she received from the pious citizens, eked out support for herself and sisters.* Thinking that she might find solace in poesy, and, indeed, it has often soothed the agonies of the human heart, she composed a poem in which she bewails the miseries which the sacrilegious French had inflicted on the Eternal city. None can read the "*Dirge of the Roman Virgins in the days of the terrible democracy*,"[1] without feeling the tears filling his eyes. It is in the metre which the Italians call "*Ottava Rima*," and we give a few passages for the reader's satisfaction:—

Afflicted Virgins we; and near to quitting
Our mortal spoils, consumed by want and woe:
With anguish, such a mournful sight befitting,
We watch our sacred dwelling's overthrow;
Nor shall our sorrow suffer intermitting,
Our tears, unsoothed, shall never cease to flow,
If thou, O God, wilt not in mercy turn
A pitying eye upon us where we mourn.

Day after day, the turtle—sweet lamenting—
Broodeth, a Providence, around her nest;
Night after night, the clover pasture scenting,
Wendeth the sated sheep to quiet rest;
Retired within these cloisters, and repenting,
We hoped to die, and in the hope were blest;
But oh! just heaven, what wolfish hordes beroam,
What carrion birds infest our chosen home?"

[1] The original title of the poem runs thus. *Il pianto delle Sacre Vergini Romane nella funesta Democrazia di Roma, Composizione di Suor Anna Vittoria Dola a Domenicana in S. M. Maddalena, fra gli Arcadi Florinda*

This accomplished nun possessed a considerable knowledge of Latinity, indeed, far greater than is usually attained by any lady in or out of the cloister. She was also well skilled in vocal and instrumental music, and was wont to cheer her afflicted sisterhood with many a strain of melody. Pius VII., who held Sister Dolara in the highest esteem, often visited her in her lonely cell, and on more than one occasion sat to her for his portrait. These likenesses were admirably painted; and Pope Leo XII., conferred a similar honor on this ornament of the cloister. The Arcadia of Rome, elected her a member of their learned body, and gave her the name of *Florinda Carisia*. Thus were all the accomplishments of Sister Plautilla Nelli, the Paintress, and of the Poetess, Sister Lorenza Strozzi, revived in the person of the gifted Dolara. Amongst her

Carisia, Roma, 1818. I am indebted to the Rev. J. Kenyon, P.P., Templederry, for the translation given in the text. As the reader may desire to see the original verses, we subjoin them.

"Noi siamo oppresse ed a lasciar vicine
Fra l'inedia e il dolor l'afflitta spoglia;
Crolla il sacro edifizo; e le rovine
Pender veggiam in affannosa doglia;
Ne' del nostro penar si scorge il fine,
Nè il pianto nostro v' è chi terger voglia;
Se tu placato alfin, Dio de' viventi,
Dolce pietá del nostro mal non senti'.
Passa la tortorella i dì secura
Dolcemente gemendo entro il suo nido,
Torna il gregge all' ovil dalla pastura
Senza timor di' tradimento infido.
Noi pure entrando in queste elette mura
Credemmo d' afferrar securo lido;
Ma ad insidiarne, oh ciel, sembran d' accordo
L' avoltoio rapace e il lupo ingordo."

paintings, besides the various likenesses of Pius VII., and a figure of S. Pius V., she has left a copy of Guido Reni's portrait of Beatrice Cenci; two portraits of two Roman sisters; a portrait of the Queen of Etruria, and other works which I cannot now call to mind. She died in her monastery, of which she was superioress, A.D. 1827, aged sixty-three years.[1] But it is time that we should terminate these Memoirs; let it not be supposed, however, that we have exhausted the material that we have collected, nor let any one presume, that we flatter ourselves with the notion of having performed the task of a good and accurate historian. Nevertheless we would fain persuade ourselves that we have given our readers a sufficient idea

[1] It delights me to be able to state that our Order can still point to some gifted cultivators of the Fine Arts. We have already alluded to Father Serafino Guidotti, of Florence; but I will not omit to mention the lay-brother Fra Gerolamo Bianchedi of Faenza, who has superintended all the restorations of the magnificent Church of S. Domenico, in Bologna. The inscription which has been dedicated to him, and which we subjoin, will testify the esteem which is entertained for this excellent lay-brother. The translator is informed that Fra Gerolamo died since the publication of Father Marchese's work.

I7. AGOSTO MDCCCXLIV. GIROLAMO. BIANCHEDI. DA. FAENZA.
FRATE. CONVERSO. DOMENICANO. PIU. PRESTO. MARAVIGLIOSO. CHE.
ABILISSIMO. MECCANICO. DI. MAESTRI-CONSIGLI. DI. CURE. INCESSANTI.
AIUTANDO. COSPIRÒ. A. TUTTI. ORNAMENTI. TESTE. RINNOVATI.
IN. BOLOGNA. AL. TEMPIO. SACRO. AL. GRANDE. GUZMANO.
NE GIOVÒ. LA. MAGNIFICENZA. CON. ESQUISITI. SUOI. LAVORI. IN.
ISTUCCO. A. CAPITELLI. A. MENSOLE. A. FOGLIAMI. DI. COLONNE. E.
CORNICI. DIVISÒ. ED. EBBE. CONGEGNATO. IN. SEVIGIO. DI. OGNI.
SORTA. ARTIERI. PRINCIPALMENTE. DE. PITTORI. OPERANTI. ALLA.
CAPPELLA. DELL'. INCLITO. PATRIARCA. PONTI. E. ARNESI. ALTRI.
PER. BONTÀ. DI. STRUTTURA. E. ADOPERAMENTO. LODATISSIMI. PERCHE.
DI. TANTA.
VIRTU. E. SOLERZIA. D'INGEGNO. AMMIRANDOSI. LE. GENTI. PER. QUESTO.
PUBLICO. SEGNO. DI. GRATULAZIONE. E. D'OSSERVANZA. VOLLE. PIU.
D'UNO. A. LUI. VENIRNE. INTERPRETE. LIETO. E. NARRATORE.
Di D. Giuseppe Maccolini Faentino.

of the lives and works of the most *Eminent* Painters, Sculptors and Architects of the Dominican Order, of whom alone we meant to write. At some future period we hope to be able to produce a more perfect work, which shall be the result of more diligent and extensive researches.

CHAPTER XXI.

Origin of the present Memoirs ; and Epilogue.

In the autumn of 1840, after crossing the rugged crests of the Ligurian Apennines, I journeyed along the smiling banks of the Arno. The glorious sky of liquid blue, the teeming fertility of the soil, and the balmy air of the beauteous clime filled my soul with ineffable delight. But far more charming to my enraptured vision were the innumerable monuments raised by the genius of this illustrious people, in the crowded cities, on the sunny uplands, and in the fruitful valleys. Almost spell-bound on beholding such magnificence, and while my memory reverted to the bye-gone greatness of this classic land, I asked my guide to tell me the names of the artists who upreared these wondrous works. From time to time he mentioned some confrere of mine, with whose name my ear was not familiar. In Pisa, Prato, Pistoja, Florence, Cortona, and Arezzo, he continued to repeat the name of some member of the Dominican Order. Astonished at discovering this colony of Religious Artists, I betook myself to the history of our Institute, but its pages told me nothing of these celebrated men. I then crossed the mountains of Umbria, and descended into the fertile plains of the Romagna, and here I found

another band of artists belonging to my Order, who, if not equal to the former, are, nevertheless, far from being obscure. I shut myself up in the archives; I searched the libraries; and, after a very brief interval, collected abundant notices of their lives and works. My original intention was to shape them into a series of historical sketches; but finding that my researches produced an accumulation of matter, I resolved to enlarge the confines of my labours. Such, reader, is the work which I now submit to your perusal, a work which I have written at a period when my health was infirm, and in times which have filled my heart with profoundest melancholy. I have here endeavoured to describe to you, although imperfectly, how much my confreres have done for the benefit of the Arts, during a period of more than six hundred years. They saw the light in the days of the Renaissance; and we find them at an early moment associated with Niccolo Pisano, the man who first revived sculpture and architecture in Italy. After having essayed sculpture, and left two splendid monuments of their chisel in the Urn of S. Dominic in Bologna, and on the façade of the cathedral of Orvieto, which eternizes the name of Fra Guglielmo Agnelli, they devoted themselves heart and soul to civil and religious architecture. And, indeed, if any one should ever undertake to write the history of this most noble art, he must necessarily throw much light on what the Dominicans have done for its advancement in a cycle of four hundred years. In Rome, Florence, Pisa and Venice, they formed a community of architects, engineers, and masons; and they practised these various branches for the benefit of the different States—nay, and of the private citizens, with a zeal and intelligence of which monastic history furnishes no parallel. Meanwhile, painting arose

and grew to grandeur with Giotto, Gaddi, Memmi, and men of such stamp. It was then that this divine art began to echo the sublime strains of Alighieri, and to console Italy in the days of her direst tribulations. The Preaching-Friars could not remain insensible to the fascination of such beauties; and they, therefore, devoted themselves to painting, with that intensity of ardour which characterised their cultivation of architecture. They commenced with miniature, which was the usual apprenticeship of the Giotto School; and they invariably applied themselves at the same time to glass-painting, which may be said to have been the inseparable companion of miniature in the dark ages. In fact, these two arts sprung into existence simultaneously, were subjected to the same vicissitudes, and shared one common fate. Hence the noble band of artists that we have recorded. And if Miniature glories in the name of the Blessed Goivanni Angelico, Glass-Painting may reasonably pride itself on that of the Blessed James of Ulm, both of whom were illustrious for their sanctity and artistic powers. After the lapse of about two centuries and a half, during which the cultivators of these twin-born arts produced so many, and such glorious, monuments of their genius, both Miniature and Glass-Painting closed their career with Fra Eustachio of Florence, and Fra Guglielmo of Marcillat.

But Painting was destined to enjoy a more protracted and glorious existence. We have written at considerable length, of the Angelico and of Porta, nor have we hesitated to confess our inability to treat of either of them in that style, which the sublimity of their merits demands. But after having seen the Deposition from the Cross, and the Final Judgment by the former; and the S. Mark, and the other paintings of the latter now in Lucca, every one will

readily admit, that the historian can do little more than point to them in solemn silence. Corradini, Buonsignori, Maraveja, Signoracci, Nelli, Mayno, and Andrè, are so many gems set in the crowns of the two former, and with them we close the series of the Dominican Painters.

The history of Sculpture in marble, after Agnelli's period, does not furnish us with any Dominican worthy of being recorded in these pages; but carving in wood, and casting in bronze, shall evermore borrow lustre from the names of Fra Damiano Da Bergamo, and Father Domenico Portigiani.

Meanwhile, the study of Vitruvius and Leon Battista Alberti, had evoked the classic eurythmy of the Greeks and Romans, to a new life, and the Preaching-Friars were amongst the earliest promoters of this style of Architecture, as they were of that which has been designated Teutonic and Lombard. Colonna, Giocondo and Danti are quite sufficient to establish the artistic glory of our Order, in all that relates to this first born of the Arts. They are the links in that chain of civil and military engineers, who, when Italy was down-trodden and harried by foreign armies, devoted themselves to her defence, and made her an offering, not only of their genius, but of their hearts and hands. With them we close the Memoirs of the Dominican Artificers.

Those who are conversant with the religious, political, and literary history of Italy, need not be told that the inmate of the cloister was often wont to lay down the pen which he had devoted to the writing of some work on Theology, Canon law or Philosophy, in order to design a temple, and superintend its erection; nor is it necessary for us to describe how these contemplative recluses, after having preached peace to the factions, while internecine discord was raging, and snatched the murder-

ous weapons from their hands, sat down to miniature a codex, or to illuminate some choral book for their lecterns. Often and often after ministering the consolations of religion to the moribund, has the Friar resumed his pencil to de pict the sublimest pages of the Bible on canvas, or on the walls of his church and cloister. Identified during a protracted period with all the joys and sufferings of society, they made it the grand business of their lives, to supply its great moral and intellectual requirements; and not content with this, they laboured indefatigably to decorate their natal soil with the choicest productions of their genius and workmanship. Time, that has destroyed so many of man's monuments, and man, who, alas! forgets so soon, has not been able to obliterate the traces of their love for our beautiful, but unfortunate Italy. The last century requited all the services which the religious Orders had conferred on society, with exile and rapine. The present has revindicated their memories and rights; but as it has revived us, it justly expects that we will entitle ourselves to its esteem and confidence, by works worthy of our calling. Our mission therefore is, to re kindle the fire of charity in bosoms which have been chilled by social egotism, to infuse new life into hearts which have been weakened by the corrupting influences of these times; to consecrate our energies to the amelioration of the people; to revive the love of study, and of profound learning, thus, proving by every act of our lives as well as by our *pens*, that Religion, however inflexibly it may be opposed to a spurious and false progress is, nevertheless, the truest protectress of sound knowledge and the most zealous patroness of national prosperity. Nor should we forget the Arts, for it is incumbent on us to redeem them from the cold and servile imitation of the ancients, to inspire them with noble and sublime senti

ments, and to associate them with moral philosophy, chastened eloquence, and all that is sanctified by Religion. This, indeed, is our glorious mission; wherefore, if there be any amongst us, who has not ability for the literary or scientific arena, let him remember, that the field of Art is open to him: let him who cannot speak from the professor's chair, or from the pulpit, speak with the chisel and the pencil, but let us all speak a noble, and holy language. Never let us forget, that we saved the Arts in the days of barbaric devastations; and that we sheltered and cherished them in the times of the Renaissance. Never let us forget, that we warmed them with the breath of our hearts, and that we educated them for the honour and glory of Christianity. Why should we repudiate a glory which is all our own—a glory of which we have been so long the undisputed possessors? Acting thus, we will convince all mankind that we have fully comprehended the sublimity of our vocation; and for every benefit we bestow on the people, we shall receive the benedictions of grateful hearts.

Such, reader, are the motives, which induced me to write the *Memoirs of the most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects of the Order of S. Dominic.* I now offer this work, as a tribute of affectionate gratitude to our age and country, and as an acknowledgment of the great obligations which both have conferred on us. Would that I were able to produce something better calculated to prove how deeply sensible I am of these obligations; but, even though I may have fallen far short of my intentions, I can say, with sincerity, that I have laboured according to the best of my ability.

ILLUSTRATIONS

OF

Some Paintings in the Imperial, and Royal Gallery

OF

THE FLORENTINE ACADEMY.

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS CHRIST,

A PAINTING ON PANEL,

BY

GIOTTO DA BONDONE DA VESPIGNANO.

Some one has written, I know not whether in jest or earnest, that the Italians were obliged to invite the Byzantines to visit their peninsula in the middle ages, to revive the Arts, and to teach them to our forefathers. A more deplorable condition than this we cannot imagine; and those who made the assertion did not hesitate to add, that the Germans, influenced by some such feelings of commiseration, were the first to indoctrinate us in Sculpture and Architecture. At a subsequent period, say the abettors of this opinion, when Byzantine genius was in the wane, or when they grew tired of instructing us, the Germans were our only teachers—the only men who cared to inspire us with a love of the three Sister-Arts;—nor do we lack proofs of this assertion. Out of the many let us select the following:—"All the arts of design

uring the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, were ıdubitably under the influence of Architecture; and this, ccording to Vasari, in both these periods was Teutonic r German. Hence, they are manifestly in error who ern that first period of our painting Antique or Giot-esque, whereas it should be designated Teutonic or *Pointed*." But not satisfied with this, they insisted that ıe Italians had long since lost Arts, Religion, and oetry; and as to Painting and Sculpture, they argued ıat both transmigrated to those very Germans who ere the first to teach them to us. The author of this atement does not tell us what became of Religion or oetry, nor does he name the happy nation that gave em an asylum; in fact, he was as incapable of enlight-ing the world on this subject as I am.

These extravaganzas have been recently set forth by . Ultramontane, in a work relating to German Arts.

In fact, the Byzantines who sought our shores to cape the fury of the Iconoclasts, were so miserably ficient in genius as well as art, that Cimabue, not to eak of Giotto, was quite sufficient to throw them into e shade; and as to the few Germans who visited Italy, ether for the purpose of learning or teaching Sculpture d Architecture, Niccola of Pisa so eclipsed them, that ir names and works have long since faded out of the mories of men.

Which of all the civilized nations of Europe could ew, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, a single nter who could equal or rival Giotto? His, in sooth, s a genius so singular, that in the study of nature, and the style of developing his conceptions, none could be nd to excel him. With great truth, therefore, Minardi asserted that Giotto's power of expression was most id in its essential characters; but, what is still more

admirable, he was able to reduce it to such unity a
marvellous simplicity, that neither the Greeks w
flourished before him, nor Lionardo, nor Raffaello, w
lived at a later period, were able to produce anythi
better. But since Guerrazzi and La Farina have writt
a glorious vindication of this father of Italian paintin
we will confine ourselves to a few observations.

The Baptism of Jesus Christ, by this illustrious maste
possesses all the merits which we, with Minardi, recogni
in Giotto. No one can behold this work without bei
struck by the profound reverence of the Baptist, and t
timidity with which he approaches his sublime functio
The Redeemer's attitude evinces the most marked hum
lity, and He seems to inspire the Baptist with confidenc
while He bends His sacred brow and whole pers
beneath the ministry of John. The two disciples w
hold the Redeemer's garments, are characterized by t
tenderest and most affectionate devotion. Wonderfu
beautiful is the figure of the Eternal Father, who
represented sending down the Paraclete on the Wo
made Flesh; and the action is so true, that we are
once reminded of the sacred text, "This is my belov
Son: hear ye Him." If, after having considered t
merits of the conception, and the manner in which t
artist has developed it, we direct our attention to t
geometrical part of the composition, we must instan
perceive how marvellous was Giotto's success in rescu
art from the influence of the old traditions. The ru
of the Redeemer, and the figure of the precursor is w
designed; the arrangement of the drapery is facile a
spontaneous, covering but not concealing the per
and all the parts harmonize so admirably, that they ea
produce that unity which is the most essential predic
of a picture as well as of a poem.

Our age has restored literature by the study of ante, and the golden "Trecento:" may the study Giotto and his followers serve to re-invigorate Italian ainting!

LEGEND OF S. HUMILITY,

A PICTURE ON PANEL,

BY

BUONAMICO BUFFALMACCO.

HE civil and political condition of Italy in the thir-enth century, very rarely showered roses on conjugal ion. It frequently happened that a momentary truce conciled two families who had long been at deadly id; or, united in matrimonial bands two hearts which l not love reciprocally. Need we say that sangui-ry hatreds often kept apart two souls which were ated to love, and live for each other's weal? The gger and the poison often destroyed a union which s suggested by the sordid thirst of gold; and the exile kinsmen often widowed a mother or a spouse prema-ely. At such a period, when vengeance and factious red burned in every bosom; when this land was olated by the stranger and its own children; when n bequeathed to posterity, not their possessions, their deadliest enmities, it was no unusual thing a heart that execrated a soil moist with the od and tears of those it prized, to raise itself above h accursed scenes, in order to contemplate that blessed de where tyranny cannot enter, and where the vile

interests of this miserable life never can come into col sion.

Towards the middle of that century a maiden, rather an angel in human semblance, one whose he yearned for the pure joys of heaven, was compelled the avaricious interests of her family, to wed a youthf cavalier. She was called Rosane; and he Ugolotto Ca cianemici of Faenza. Both were of noble lineage, a both deserved to be happy because virtuous; if happine could have been found mid such scenes of blood a havoc. One day the youthful bride addressed her h band thus, "Dost thou not feel that we can find no re permanent happiness here on earth, and should we n aspire to that peace and bliss which we can attain heaven? Let us, therefore, separate for a while, and the silence of some cloister make a sacrifice of ourselves God for our country, our kindred, and for all the whom we love. Time fleets by with lightning spe and we shall soon be re-united in the kingdom of heave where we shall enjoy all that felicity which has be denied us here below." Ugolotto assented; and he a Rosane, who took the name of Humility, lived a m holy and austere life, according to the rule of Vallo brosa.

The pathetic epopee of this heroine of the dark ag deserved to be transmitted to future times by Ital painting, which then delighted to select its subjects, only from the Bible, but from these pious legend which the people were so fond; and which, like Chronicles of Malaspina and Villani, are the most u ring guides to the innermost nature of an age so pro of good, and so tremendous in its evils. Buffalma undertook to paint this legend in eleven little histor in one of which he represented the bride in the act

ersuading her husband to consent to their separation. osane's features evidence the joy of a heart which has nceived a grand project, and hopes to see it realized. golotto, on the other hand, seems sad and pensive, and verwhelmed with anguish, just as he is about to part om his beloved consort. As in all his other works, the inter has here shown himself fully qualified to develop ese pathetic conceptions, for which we vainly seek in e works of modern artists.

This simple composition is faultless, nay, most perfect. he design is sufficiently correct, and the beautiful aping has none of that dryness or harshness which we o often find in the productions of the Giotto school. or should we omit to mention, that Buffalmacco has re given a specimen of linear perspective worthy a inter of the following century. This picture was ginally in the Convent of S. Salvi, from which it was noved to that of S. Verdiana. It is now in the perial and Royal Academy of Design.

LEGEND OF S. HUMILITY,

A PICTURE ON PANEL,

BY

BUONAMICO BUFFALMACCO.

THREE painters have associated their names with the e fathers of the Italian language. The first of these Giotto, that multiform and sublime genius, who first ncipated us from the Byzantine types, and created a onal school of painting. His, in sooth, was a name thy of being identified with that of the Great Poet, , for the rude songs of the provençals, gave us grand

Italian verse, and created that marvellous poem in whos
structure, heaven and earth may be said to have taken par
The second was Simone Memmi, who, after having in
parted gracefulness to the severe forms of his master,* wei
in search of the beau-ideal, and secured for himself the lov
and esteem of Petrarca, who transfused such copiousne
and harmony into our idiom. The one has immortalize
Laura in his deathless sonnets, and the other may b
said to have apotheosized her by his glorious pencl
The third was Buonamico Buffalmacco, that bizarre ar
fantastic genius, who may be justly termed a jongleur
painting. Every one knows what delight he took
amusing himself at the expense of old Andrea Tafi ar
the simple Calandrino. This eminent artist is eterniz
in the pages of the Certaldese, where we find su
interesting details of his facetiousness. Even though t
paintings of these three grand masters should perish, t
Divina Commedia, the Canzoniere, and the Decamero
shall perpetuate their memories for evermore. Buff
macco's artistic genius was truly marvellous, albeit
did not study overmuch. "When he wished to app
himself diligently," says Vasari, "although that diligen
was fitful, he was inferior to no man of his period."
his truthful imitation of nature, and in facility of de
loping his conceptions, he was excelled by none of th
who preceded or came after him. According to R
he was the first to abandon the style so invariably
lowed by the Greeks in depicting the Saints. We n
scarcely say that they represented the denizens of hea
as sallow, gloomy beings; whereas Buffalmacco gave s
happy tintings to their countenances, that they loo
as if they had been painted in "blood and mi

* Giotto.

Hence, he was wont to say to the nuns of the Convent of Faenza, "Fetch me from your cellars some of that racy *vernaccia*, (Tuscan wine,) that I may be able to infuse blood into the veins of my Saints, and comfort this poor old stomach." He may be said to have reduced painting to a species of parody: and some of his works resemble a canto of the Orlando Innamorato, or of the Morgante Maggiore. For the nuns of Vallombrosa he painted the Legend of S. Humility, as she was their foundress. He represented the holy woman assisting at the religious investment of her husband, Ugolotto. The composition is one of extreme simplicity. The chapel in which the ceremony takes place is approached through a graceful Gothic peristyle. Before the altar stands a priest, in the act of clothing the new candidate with the sacred habit; and Ugolotto receives it kneeling, and evincing the profoundest recollection. Two monks contemplate the scene from behind the altar; but the most charming figure is that of S. Humility, who, with features radiant with joy, like one who sacrifices to God all that she holds most dear, stands with her arms crossed on her bosom, and eyes raised to heaven imploring grace for her consort, that he may be empowered to bear all the rigours of monastic life. The want of gracefulness in the figure of S. Humility is amply compensated by the translucent devotion which is discernible on the features of her who magnanimously renounces all that was dearest to her here below.

SOME PAINTINGS,

WHICH DECORATE A DEPOSITION FROM THE CROSS,

BY

FRA GIOVANNI ANGELICO DEL MUGELLO.

The marvellous revolution created by the genius of Massaccio, may be said to have superseded the sublime and fertile school of Giotto. For fully a century and a half the latter ruled supremely over Italian Art; and, if we except the schools of Sanzio and the Caracci, there never existed a single one which produced such glorious painters. Its foremost men were Taddeo Gaddi, Andrea di Cione Orgagna, Buffalmacco, Spinello di Arezzo, Simone Memmi di Siena, and Pietro Cavallini of Rome. Whosoever would desire to contemplate the monuments of their glory, must visit the Camposanto of Pisa, S. Francesco of Assisi, S. Croce, and S. Maria Novella in Florence. But the new school, or, as it is commonly termed, the School of the *Naturalists*, excelled it in the study of the *true*, in design, chiaroscuro, and perspective, not to speak of the nude, landscape, or the variety and richness of ornamentation. When, however, it began to cultivate painting in oil, it sealed its triumph and cast the old school into the shade.

Meanwhile an humble friar, faithful to the tradition of Giotto, was cultivating the art of painting in the Convent of S. Domenico in Fiesole. Confining himself however, to such an adoption of the new method as was sanctioned by the severe maxims which he professed, he like many others, maintained that the style followed by the old masters, in all that regarded *sacred painting*, was

by far the best; and he was intimately convinced that its grand object should be, not merely to afford delight to the senses by means of brilliant colouring and beauty of expression, but rather to awaken in the human heart a love of heavenly things. His notion was that sacred painting should act on the soul like the language of holy eloquence, instructing the people in the grand truths of the Christian Faith, and inspiring them with the love of virtue. Wherefore, as *religious sentiment* cannot be transmitted through the medium of precepts, and as no power of imagination or invention can supply it, if it be not nurtured in the heart, nay if it be not enshrined in the soul, Fra Giovanni del Mugello, devoted himself to painting and prayer in the silence of his cell, absorpt in the sweetest and most ecstatic contemplations. The followers of the new school candidly admitted that Fra Giovanni had not erred, for when they sought in nature a type that could equal the ideal of the early cultivators of Christian Art, they failed to find it. The very moment the recluse of Fiesole had produced the charming effigy of the Virgin hearing the grand tidings conveyed to her by the Archangel, and that of the Virgin crowned by her Son, both people and artists asked each other where he had discovered outlines so pure, forms so celestial, and that beauty that transcends all earthly gracefulness. In order to transmit to future ages their profound admiration of this great artist, they styled him the Angelico—thus proclaiming that he excelled every other painter in depicting the glories of heaven. He was the last follower of the Giotto school, and with him died out these traditions which had been conserved by the Greeks, and handed down to the Giotteschi. In that age, so prolific of such wonderful political revolutions. Arts and manners underwent the most singular alterations;

and Feudal society made way for modern society. Nevertheless, even after the lapse of four centuries, and notwithstanding the sublimest works of the various artists who intervened, the mind and the heart must always derive the sweetest delight from the paintings of the Angelico. Like the history of our misfortunes and our glories, they invariably bring the tears to our eyes.

The six figures of which we mean to speak, form part of the rich ornamentation of the Deposition from the Cross. There are, altogether, twenty figures in this ornamentation, some of which are half and some whole, exclusive of the three little histories on the cusps, which are usually attributed to the monk Lorenzo, who so closely resembles the Angelico, as an artist as well as a religious.

The S. Michele is a figure, the terrible majesty of whose aspect reminds us of the chief of the heavenly hosts described by Milton. It somewhat resembles Donatello's S. Giorgio, but it has less of the mere mortal in its character. The outlines are remarkable for their sweetness: the perspective is admirably managed, and this proves that the Angelico, though he may occasionally seem negligent, was far from being ignorant of this most essential department of painting.

S. Peter is represented contemplating that tragic scene of the Deposition. Oh! the piety, and devotion on that Apostle's features! This most noble figure—the prince of the Apostles and Vicar of Christ—is a most natural accessory to the grand subject which the Angelico undertook to delineate.

After S. Peter come S. Andrew and S. Paul: the former holds the cross, the latter the sword, and both the book of the Gospels. For the preaching of that word which has so marvellously exalted the human race, the

both laid down their lives and won the martyr's palm. The sacred pages record two most extraordinary men; Moses in the old, and Paul in the new, law. Michelangiolo alone was destined to sculpture the semblance of the Leader of the Israelites; and it would be idle to hope that any artist can ever excel the Angelico's portrait of S. Paul. The ample forehead, flashing eye, and majestic bearing of the Angelico's "Paul," remind you at once of the man who fearlessly preached Christ on the Areopagus; and blenched not when he stood confronting the executioner. In a word, Fra Giovanni has imparted to this figure all the characteristics which we may learn of the "vessel of election" in his epistles and in the Apostolic Acts. The Apostle is represented holding a sword, the point of which rests on the Sacred Volume: thus signifying that he was prepared to promulgate its doctrines, even at the expense of his blood. S. Andrew, absorbed in profoundest grief, meditates this mystery of love, and seems yearning to sacrifice himself on the cross.

Then follow the figures of the two great orators of their age. S. Dominic, Founder of the Preaching-Friars, and S. Bernardino da Siena of the Minors. Both of these, in their respective periods, preached the gospel with most signal success. The one throughout a great part of Europe, and the other in Italy. Although they were not destined to shed their blood in attestation of the Christian Religion, no one who considers the difficulties with which they had to contend, can assert that the life of each was not a protracted and painful martyrdom.

All these figures are beautifully designed and coloured. The management of the draperies and the *expression* may be described as truly admirable.

The painting of the Deposition belonged to the church

of the Holy Trinity; and it is mentioned by Vasari and the Chronicle of the Convent of S. Domenico in Fiesole.

S. BARBERA,

A PAINTING ON PANEL,

BY

COSIMO ROSSELLI.

One day when a party of Florentine painters, sculptors, and architects were amusing themselves, Andrea Orgagna, who outshone all the other cultivators of the three Sister-Arts, asked the following question:—who, after Giotto, should be regarded as the grandest Master? The opinions, as may be expected in all such controversies, were various and conflicting; some maintaining the supremacy for Cimabue; whilst others contended for Stefano, Buffalmacco, nay, and even for men of minor importance. Taddeo Gaddi, after having heard the opinions of the disputants, then gave expression to this severe but truthful sentiment: "Most certainly they were all most distinguished painters; but this art is and has been declining."[1] Now, if instead of mooting the question raised by Orgagna fully a century before, in Florence, we were to go back to the days when Sixtus IV. employed Botticelli, Ghirlandaio, Rosselli, D. Bartolommeo di Arezzo, and Luca di Cortona to paint in the Vatican, and ask who was the ablest master after Massaccio, I doubt much whether we could echo the severe sentence pronounced by Gaddi. In fact, although we admit that the former did much for the advancement

[1] Franco Sacchetti, *Novella* 136.

of painting, and made marvellous progress in the study of the nude and perspective, it must be confessed, nevertheless, that none of them excelled or rivalled Massaccio; who should be described rather as a creator of living men, than a mere delineator of their effigies. Moreover, let it be borne in mind, that the great majority of his predecessors were miserable copyists of nature, and remarkable for many defects; and that they never succeeded in elevating themselves to that ideal which has immortalized the genius of Raffaello and Lionardo da Vinci. To be convinced of this, you have only to contemplate the paintings by Andrea del Castagno, Verocchio, and the productions of Cosimo Rosselli, which are so deficient in grace, beauty of types, the facile imitation of truth, and that simple management of drapery which may be found in the works of the Giotto school, and in those of Raffaello. Of Rosselli, it may be said that he commenced well, and gave great promise of future excellence, when he painted the Miracle of the Most Holy Sacrament, in the church of S. Ambrose in Florence. But all the anticipations of his admirers were never realized: for, as soon as he set about contending with Signorelli and Ghirlandaio for the prize offered by Sixtus IV. to the master who would execute the best painting in the Vatican, he became conscious of his inferiority, and despairing of fame, betook himself to the acquirement of wealth, hoping to derive from the furnace of the alchemists, that fortune which his mediocre genius denied him. After wasting his time and substance, and discovering how he had been deceived by Charlatans, he died poor in reputation, and still poorer in purse.

No matter how little one may be conversant with art, he must admit the justice of our criticism, after having seen Rosselli's Legend of S. Barbera. The three figures

are feeble in design, ignoble in the expression of the countenances, and totally devoid of grace. Nevertheless, we cannot but praise the style of the composition, which is characterised by the sobriety and philosophy of the Quattrocentisti; and the holy patroness of military fortifications, (under whose patronage a number of Germans devoted themselves to pious practices in Florence,) possesses as much majesty of action and features as amply compensates for the defect of beauty. As to the figure of the mail-clad warrior, whom she tramples under her feet, we may observe that it is in the symbolic style of the Greeks and Giotteschi; and that the artist's object was to signify the triumph of virtue over brute force. In our judgment, the figure of the warrior is designed in the most perfect perspective. Instead of making any comment on the two figures of S. John Baptist and S. Mathias the Apostle, we will content ourselves with repeating Virgil's admonition to Dante—"Look, and pass on!"[1]

[1] For further particulars regarding the Legend of S. Barbera, see Mrs. Jameson's beautiful work, "The Poetry of Sacred and Legendary Art."

DOCUMENTS

TO ILLUSTRATE

THE MEMOIRS OF THE DOMINICAN ARTISTS.

BOOK II.

PAGE 32.

Miscellanea, No. 2 ; 1 vol. in folio, MS.
(Archives of S. Marco.)

Contract between Fra Bartolommeo della Porta and Mariotto Albertinelli, by which the latter binds himself to administer the property of Pietro del Fattorino, and to teach him the art of painting.

Y H S (Jesus.)

"January 1st, 1505. In the name of God and of the glorious Virgin Mary, be it known to all who will see or read these presents, that Fra Santi of Lucca, O. S. D., and now prior in the convent of S. Marco in Florence, has bound Piero di Paolo to Mariotto, son of Biagio, for the term of six years, commencing on the 1st of January, 1505, and terminating on the 1st of January, 1511. And it is agreed and stipulated between said Prior and said Mariotto, that the latter shall teach Pietro the art of painting, laying on gold, etc. ; and that Pietro shall, in all things, prove his obedience to said Mariotto, without any remuneration or reward from said master during the term of six years. And the aforesaid parties are agreed that all the property inherited by said Pietro from Paolo, son of Jacopo, (del Fattorino,) shall be administered, preserved, and turned to the best advantage by Mariotto, who binds himself to take diligent care of said property ; providing, like a good and faithful administrator, that it shall sustain no detriment. All this property shall belong to Mariotto during the term of six years ; and he shall be empowered to receive all its fruits and rents during said term. The property is hereinafter described, to wit :—

"A house situated in the parish of S. Pietro Gattolini, and a vineyard, together with other pieces of arable ground, in said parish ; and another vineyard, and some lots of ground and woods in Val di Neve, together with one hundred and eleven florins, at seven per cent. now in the bank of the commune of Florence.

"And said Mariotto binds himself to lodge and diet said Pietro in his own house, and to shoe and clothe him according to his condition. And provided Pietro should ask Mariotto for money, he shall not be bound to advance him more than seven soldi per month. But in case Pietro should not ask him for money, said Mariotto shall not be bound to give it or to make it good to him at the expiration of said term. Said Mariotto, moreover, shall be bound to have an office celebrated for the repose of the soul of Paolo (del Fattorino) each year in the church of S. Pietro Gattolini; and he shall be bound to give the priest the sum of two lire, and two pounds of wax candles, according to ancient usage. And the aforesaid parties have agreed that all the parties having claims on, or indebted to, said property, shall apply to said Mariotto, in order to receive what may be due to them, or to pay what they may owe, according to the pleasure of Mariotto; who, as a good and faithful administrator, will keep an accurate account of all payments and disbursements, and give satisfaction for same, after the expiration of six years. And they are also agreed that Mariotto shall receive as much money from the debtors as may be required for the clothing of Pietro, the improvement of his land, and the repairs of his house in Val di Neve . . . . . And in case Mariotto should not be able to raise so much money as would be required for these purposes, he shall expend thereon his own money, for which he shall be indemnified at the termination of six years, as it shall seem good to the then Prior of S. Marco in Florence. And in case that Mariotto or his heirs, should not think well of retaining said Pietro, he shall be at liberty to dismiss him on the aforesaid conditions; and should said Pietro wish to leave the tutelage of Mariotto, or his house, without completing the term of six years, said Pietro shall be bound to indemnify Mariotto according to the adjudication of whoever may be the Prior of S. Marco in Florence at the period. This provision has been made lest Pietro should malign said Mariotto, or have learned the art of painting too quickly; for it is only just that said Mariotto should be indemnified for the time and labour which he undertakes to devote to teaching Pietro. Moreover, said Pietro, with the consent of said Prior, and in presence of Fra Bartolommeo, his brother, agrees, in case he should leave Mariotto, or his house, either before or after the expiration of said term, (six years,) that he shall not be empowered to let the vineyard, situate in Val di Neve, to any other than said Mariotto, at a reasonable valuation. And it is provided also, that in case he should be disposed to sell said vineyard, he shall not be empowered to sell it to any other than the said Mariotto, for a sum to be determined by four men of the district. And in case Pietro should die without natural or legitimate children, within the term of six years, or after the expiration of the same, whosoever inherits said vineyard shall be bound to sell it to Mariotto or his heirs, for a reasonable consideration. And as to Mariotto and his heirs, should he or they be disinclined to purchase the same vineyard, it

shall be optional with them to sell or retain it as they may think fit. And it is also provided, if anything should occur within this period, involving Mariotto or Pietro in any heavy loss, that the whole matter shall be submitted to the actual Prior; and that he shall be empowered to introduce additional clauses, in order to make good said loss. Mariotto and Pietro shall agree to all these conditions, and oblige themselves to the observance of the same in all and every particular; and the Prior of S. Marco attests all this with his own sign manual. Mariotto, Pietro, and his brother Fra Bartolommeo shall subscribe with their own hands said conditions; and there shall be made two copies of this instrument, one of which shall remain with the aforesaid Mariotto, and the other with the Syndic of the convent of S. Marco.

"I, Niccolo di Piero, at the instance of the aforesaid parties, have signed this instrument, January 1st, 1505: and they shall subscribe their names at foot of same.

"I, Fra Santi Pagnini, now Prior of S. Marco in Florence, by virtue of the authority given me by Fra Bartolommeo over his brother Pietro, when he transferred his heritage to him, consent to and promise to enforce the observance of the aforesaid conditions. And I here sign my own name, in said year, month, and day.

"I, Fra Bartolommeo, brother of Peter, pledge myself to the said arrangements; and I hold that Pietro is bound to the same. Wherefore, I put my signature to this, on said day and month.

"I, Pietro di Paolo, (del Fattorino) pledge myself to the observance of all said stipulations; and I bind myself to observe all that has been agreed upon between said Prior and Mariotto. This I have done with the consent and at the instance of my brother, Fra Bartolommeo; and have put my signature thereto, on this 1st of January, 1505.

"I, Mariotto, son of Biagio, painter, with the permission of my father, hold myself bound by said provisions, and hereunto append my signature. My father shall also subscribe same.

"I, Biagio, agree to the said conditions, and oblige my son, Mariotto, to the observance of the same; and I here append my own sign manual"

II.

Page 38.

FROM THE REGISTRY OF THE CONVENT OF S. MARCO, M.DVII.

"June 18, 1507. There was a misunderstanding between Bernardo del Bianco, a citizen of Florence, and Fra Bartolommeo our painter—a misunderstanding which involved our convent—concerning an altar-piece which

said Bernardo commissioned Fra Bartolommeo to execute for the abbey of Florence, on certain conditions, which were set forth in a private document subscribed by both parties. In fact, they had agreed, that if they could not come to a mutual understanding as to the price of said picture, two common friends should be appealed to; and in case they did not make a satisfactory arrangement, the whole matter should be submitted to the Valuators of Art. Meanwhile, Fra Bartolommeo had received part of the sum agreed upon, and as soon as the picture was finished, said Bernardo began to raise objections, nor could we induce him to advance the entire amount, as we had hoped. Wherefore, having referred the matter to the Prior, and taken the opinions of various persons respecting the value of the work—for Fra Bartolommeo claimed 200 ducats, submitting, however, that, if it so pleased the community, he would be satisfied with 160, whereas, Bernardo refused to give more than 80—the whole dispute was submitted to the Abbot for his adjudication. This arrangement was made, principally because said Bernardo had been referred to the friars, and because he was a person fond of litigation and cavilling. He was desirous, moreover, that the painting should be removed from our house, pending the arbitration, and placed in the abbey, or in some third place. To this, our painter would not submit; and he stated at the same time, among other things, that Bernardo forfeited all claim to the picture, and compromised his honour and reputation. In fact, the whole affair was left in the hands of the Abbot, who came to speak to us about it, offering to settle the whole affair; but, doubtless, with the view of having the picture set up in the chapel of the abbey, for which it was destined. As soon as we had given him the necessary powers, he proceeded to Bernardo, and came back to tell us that he did not find Bernardo disposed to come into our terms. Wherefore, quoth the abbot, adopt your own course, and arrange the matter as you may think fit. Now, being obliged to go to Venice at this period, to conduct thither Martino the Lector, and also to purchase woollens, the friars commissioned Fra Giovanni de' Medici and Fra Niccolo Bartolo, to submit the whole matter to the Guild of Apothecaries—the tribunal that was empowered to adjudicate on matters of Art. The Consuls thereon referred the dispute to two common friends, and Bernardo selected Giovanni di Piero di Giovanni Franceschi; and the arbitrator chosen by us was Mariotto Albertinelli. Having lodged the amount payable for the arbitration, according to their statutes, Mariotto was commanded to value said picture, and to report thereon, all prohibition to the contrary notwithstanding. They came to no decision, and we got back the sum which had been deposited."

At page 32 of said Registry, we read:—"On account of the litigation (mention of which is made on the opposite page) concerning a picture executed by our Fra Bartolommeo, for Bernardo del Bianco, our Prior and Fathers came to the conclusion, that the whole affair, instead of being of

use, involved us in serious loss, particularly as we were obliged to go to law before a secular tribunal, and that for the sake of a merely temporal object. Knowing that this Bernardo was a very litigious person, and that the convent was much in debt; and, moreover, that certain sums of money had been advanced to the convent for said painting, it was resolved that we should get rid of this annoyance as soon and as well as we could. Wherefore, on my return from Venice, the Prior, at the instance of some of our Fathers, commissioned me, Father Ruberto, the Syndic, and Father Giovanni de' Medici, to submit the matter to the arbitration of Mariotto, the painter, and Giovanni Franceschi. We were likewise empowered to select the abbot of the Abbey of Florence. We, therefore, adopted all these measures on the 18th of June. Bonachorso, the notary of the Office della Torre, was therein instructed to act, after having obtained the consent of the said Bernardo, who, sooth to say, was very friendly on the occasion.

"Subsequently, however, the Abbot reported to Fra Giovanni de' Medici, that he would not receive any information, concerning the case in dispute, from any painter or valuator of Art. Thus, the opinions of the very painters whom he invited to give him information, went for nothing, although they had been to see the picture in the convent. Fra Bartolommeo, therefore, was very much pained that the Abbot should reject the decision of men skilled in art, and adopt that of persons who were not professionally fit to pronounce on the same. Things had gone this length, when Fra Giovanni told the Abbot, very familiarly, by way of advice—take heed that you arbitrate justly and correctly; and if you be not able to decide the matter, refer it to the Valuators of Art, for you will not succeed in satisfying either of the litigant parties. He stated, moreover, that Bernardo was more disposed to abide by sentence of the Valuators of Art, than by that of the Abbot. At all events, there was no decision given, though the matter had been pending till the 30th of June, 1507.

"Wherefore, during my absence from Florence, the arbitration was abandoned. Having returned on the 1st of July, I was informed that the Abbot had sent for me on the 30th of June; and, being commissioned by the Vicar of the convent, (in the absence of the Prior, who had set out for Rome with the General,) and accompanied by the aforesaid Giovanni, I proceeded to the Abbot, with the intention of renewing the arbitration, in compliance with the request that had been made on the part of the Abbot, in my presence, by Giovanni Franceschi, Lorenzo di Credi, the painter, and Gherardo Gherardi. They, it should be told, commended Bernardo to our friars, because he adjourned the hearing of the case till such time as the Abbot could obtain certain information, which he was about to get. But the Abbot sent us word that he was engaged, that he could not see us, that he had sent for us the day before, and that the time for coming to a decision had gone by; in a word, that he had no further need of us. When the aforesaid Giovanni

received this answer, we resolved on a new course; and it was determined that Giovanni and Lorenzo di Credi, the painter, should come to an agreement as to the value of the picture, and without mentioning it to any other party, should communicate with us. We, therefore, professed ourselves willing to ratify and approve of their decision. Giovanni thereon went to look for said Lorenzo, but they could not come to any agreement, as they were prevented from doing so by the laws that regulate Art. Hence it was necessary to apply to the Guild of Apothecaries; and we summoned said Bernardo; and the Consuls decreed that we should submit to the Valuators of Art. We then deposited five ducats, in compliance with the statute enacted by the Guild; but, seeing that it did not become us, as religious, to appeal to a secular tribunal, the Syndic of the convent and Francesco Magalotti, who was one of our best benefactors, and a kinsman of said Bernardo, adopted the advice of the Vicar-General, who, with the Prior and Fathers of the convent, decided that the whole matter should be referred to said Francesco Magalotti. He succeeded in inducing Bernardo to give us over and above the forty ducats already paid, a further sum of sixty ducats, leaving the rest to the discretion and good will of said Bernardo. We were satisfied; and said Magalotti came to the convent on the 17th of July, accompanied by Giovanni di Piero Franceschi. The latter then gave me sixty gold ducats, and took away the painting. Giovanni de' Medici got back the deposit, which remained in the hands of the Guild, after having paid the valuators the sum to which they were entitled, as well as a small sum to the apprentices for their trouble. Thus, through the grace of God, the whole affair was most happily settled."

III.

PAGE, 55.

Extract from the said Registry.

FRA BARTOLOMMEO'S APPEAL TO THE CONVENT OF MURANO IN VENICE, A. D. 1511.

"Many years ago—I think it was in the April of 1508—Fra Bartolommeo our painter, went to Venice, accompanied by the Syndic of the convent of S. Marco. At the instance of Bartolomeo dal Zano, the Vicar General of the convent of S. Peter Martyr, of our Order, in Murano, he undertook to paint a picture on *cloth*, leaving the value of said work, which cost him much time, to be determined by two common friends. They told him, however, that the price of the picture should be about seventy or a hundred ducats, or

even more; and they gave him, by way of instalment, a certain sum to purchase the colours in same city. In fact, he received about twenty-four gold ducats, partly through the hands of Bart. de Monte Lupo, the painter and sculptor, who was then in Venice, and partly from Barnaba di Cante of Florence. This money belonged to Fra Bart. dal Zano; and it was the result of the sale of sundry copies of the Epistles of S. Catherine of Siena, which he caused to be printed and sold. The instalment, likewise, was paid out of this fund. Fra Bartolomeo del Zano, therefore, became in some sort the creditor of Fra Bartolommeo della Porta, as appears by the debit and credit book of said convent. The picture was beautifully finished in a very short period; so much so, that every one said it was worth much more than a hundred gold ducats; and this was communicated to the said convent of S. Peter Martyr in Murano, and also to the Vicar, Fra Bartolomeo. The war, however, which raged at the period, and the death of the said Vicar, prevented the community of Murano from removing the picture (it was painted in Florence) to their convent. After many letters and messages had passed between the two communities, the Venetian Dominicans commissioned two of their brotherhood to proceed to Florence, to arrange the matter with the convent of S. Marco. We therefore agreed to accept, over and above the sum already paid, (twenty-eight ducats,) a further sum of fifty gold ducats, for said picture, which should then be forwarded to its destination.

"Now, whereas a month has elapsed since the day of the departure of the two said Venetian Dominicans, and as they have not replied to our letters, we have determined on the course hereinafter specified. We feel bound, however, notwithstanding our frequent remonstrances, to profess our love for our own Order—a love that influences us more than any other consideration. Wherefore, seeing that we have had no satisfaction; and seeing, likewise, that the painting is likely to sustain detriment where it is, the Prior and Council of the convent of S. Marco have only to repeat what they already declared, in a letter expedited through the bank of Niccola del Nero, dated January 15, 1511—to wit, that if the said painting be not sent for before the 25th of February, 1511, and if the money, over and above the instalment, due for said painting, be not paid, they will sell it to others, and retain said instalment, as is usual in all similar transactions."

IV.

Page 63.

From said Registry.

"June, 1513. An order was sent by the illustrious Signory of Florence to the chamberlain del Monte, commanding him to pay us one hundred ducats, on account of the painting which had been commenced for the

Council-Hall. This order is duly registered by the public notary ; and said sum is to be paid come next October, 1513.

"The said order was communicated to me, Fra Gerolamo Dandi Gini, Syndic and Procurator of the convent, on the 17th of June, 1513.* On the 19th of July said order was formally signed by the clerks del Monte, and their chancellor.

"It was subscribed, moreover, by the Providore of the Council of Ten, and by Giovanni Masolini, one of their officials."

PAGE 67.

"Copy of ani nstrument drawn up at the dissolution of the partnership between Fra Bartolommeo and Mariotto Albertinelli, painters. This instrument was sanctioned by the Prior of S. Marco, as may be seen by his subscription thereto, and also by a reference to the credit and debit book of said convent.

"January 5, 1512. The undersigned, *i. e.* Fra Bartolommeo the painter, Fra Santi da Lucca, Prior of S. Marco, and Mariotto Albertinelli, have agreed to dissolve the partnership hitherto existing between said Fra Bartolommeo and Mariotto. Moreover, said parties have consented to make a division of the colours and other matters pertaining to their profession; and likewise of their pictures, whether finished or unfinished, all of which shall be specified at foot of this. Said Fra Bartol. and the Prior shall subscribe it with their own hands. The paintings which have been made over to the Convent of S. Marco, are the following :—

A painting on canvas, the dimensions of which are six braccia by four. The subject of said painting is a God the Father, with S. M. Magdalene, and S. Catherine of Siena; and it is valued at sixty gold ducats. After deducting twenty-eight ducats from this sum, the convent shall receive thirty ducats. And we are agreed that, if said picture should be sold for more than sixty gold ducats, one half of the entire amount shall be given to Mariotto, and the other to our Friars. In case it be not sold, it shall be the property of said convent, ... ducats 32

A head of Christ, which was given by the Friars to Lionardo Bartolini . . . . . ducats 4

A medallion of about two braccia, containing a picture of the Nativity, ... ducats 12

The following works shall be the property of Mariotto :—

A medallion of about two braccia, ... ducats 17

A Christ carrying the Cross, with the robbers and ornamentation, ducats 12

Two paintings of about one and a-half braccia each (finished), ducats 12

An Annunciation, now in possession of the Gonfalonier, and also a small picture, ... ducats 6

* He was elected Syndic of the Convent of S. Marco, May 31, 1513.

"We are also agreed that the works commenced and not yet finished, should be divided between us; and we also agree that the following shall belong to the Convent of S. Marco and Fra Bartolommeo the painter—*i. e.*, the great painting, meant for the council hall, which has been designed by said Fra Bartol.

"We are also agreed that the under-named works, not yet finished, shall be given to Mariotto in lieu of the painting meant for the council hall, which belongs to the Convent of S. Marco—that is to say, a picture designed by Fra Filippo, (perhaps Lippi,) that was to be placed in the Certosa of Pavia—also another picture designed by Fra Bartol. and meant for said Certosa—also another work of about 2 braccia, together with a little sketch by Fra Bartol. of Adam sitting and Eve standing. The latter work is about half a braccio. All these shall be the property of Mariotto.

"We agree, moreover, that all the implements and necessaries for painting, which were common to us both, shall belong to Fra Bartolommeo as long as he lives; and that after his death said implements and necessaries shall devolve on Mariotto the painter, and his heirs. They are the following: a model in wood, life size; and also another *hinged* model of about one braccio —a pair of iron compasses; and the model of a child in plaster, made by Desiderio da Settignano, the sculptor.

"I, Fra Santi da Lucca, prior of S. Marco, ratify and approve the dissolution of the partnership between Fra Bartol. and Mariotto the painter. I, Fra Bartol. ratify the foresaid arrangement, and hereunto append my signature." (The signature of Mariotto is wanting.)

VI.

Page 74.

THE RELIGIOUS OF S. MARCO PRESENT GIOVANNI BENINTENDI WITH A PAINTING BY FRA BARTOLOMMEO DELLA PORTA.

"On the 3rd of Feb. 1534, at the first hour of night, Father Felix, the prior of this convent, assembled the twenty-eight vocals of said convent, and they then and there unanimously presented to Giovanni Benintendi of the parish of S. Marco, Florence, one picture by the hand of the distinguished painter, Fra Bartolommeo, O. S. D. Said picture was in the western side of the church of S. Marco, and it contained the effigy of S. Catherine of Siena, together with portraits of various saints. The religious have freely bestowed it on the said Giovanni, and the heirs of his house; that he and they may adorn it as will seem good to them, and thus promote the honor of the said S. Catherine. This donation has been duly recorded by Bartolomeo de Azeis, a citizen and notary of Florence, on the 3rd of Feb., 1534."

VII.

PAGE 91.

CREDIT AND DEBIT BOOK OF THE HOSPICE OF S. M. MAGDALENE IN PIAN DI MUGNONE.

"In the name of God and of the ever Glorious Virgin Mary, and of our holy founder* *Messer* S. Dominic, and of *Messer* S. John Baptist, and of the whole heavenly court—all of whom we beseech to give us strength of body and soul.

"July 10th, 1514, the Madonna was painted for the chapel. . . . . That is to say, the Madonna which is at the foot of the stairs. It was painted by Fra Bartol. who was here for the recovery of his health. He brought with him two pupils of his, who painted the histories of the Holy Fathers.

"And on the 15th of said month, Fra Bartol. painted the Madonna for the refectory of the infirm. At this period Fra Filippo Strozzi was prior of S. Marco, and Fra Antonio D'Aradda was Vicar of S. M. Magdalene."

(Under date 1515, we read:)

"The Annunciation that is on the arch of the presepium, is by the hand of Fra Bartolommeo, who executed it on the 4th of October, 1515, under said fathers, and at the expense of Fra Roberto Salviati."

VIII.

PAGE 127.

NECROLOGY OF FRA BARTOLOMMEO.

Annals of the Convent of S. Marco.

"Fra Bartolommeo of Florence, was professed in the Convent of Prato; and he was the most distinguished man of his age in painting and perspective, as his many works attest. These may be seen in Rome, Florence, Lucca and Pistoja. He also painted many pictures which have been sent into France and Flanders. On his return from the baths of S. Filippo he died in this convent Octob. 6th, 1517. The demise of one so far famed for his pictorial powers, was a great loss to our community. He was a deacon and died in his forty-eight year."†

* Those who are familiar with Berceo's "Milagros de Nuestra Senora," will not be astonished at finding S. Dominic styled *Messer;* designations of this sort, however, were much more common in Spain than elsewhere.

† On the authority of Vasari, we have said that Fra Bartol. died, aged forty-eight years. The chronicle of S. Marco states that he was not more than forty-six years; but this is evidently an error, which was subsequently cancelled by the amanuensis, who for "6" substituted "8."

IX.

Page 213.

NECROLOGY OF THE CONVENT OF S. DOMENICO IN PISTOJA.

"Fra Paolino the painter, son of M. Bernardino del Signoracci (also a painter born in Pistoja) died at the age of 57, at the fifth hour of night, on the vigil of our holy founder S. Domenico. He was a simple man, upright, devout, modest and obedient. Though not highly distinguished as an Artist, he was nevertheless quick, very diligent, and possessed of considerable powers, as his many works attest; indeed, they are so numerous that this page could not contain them were I to enumerate them all. He executed the altar-piece for our church, and this work contains no less than twenty figures. . . . . Amongst his other works was a painting of the Adoration of the Magi, in which he introduced his own portrait. When he executed this latter painting he had reached his thirty-sixth year. With the money that he earned he erected the little cloister. . . . . He dwelt fourteen years in the Convent of S. Marco, in Florence. During his sojourn in Pistoja he earned eighty gold crowns. He was very benevolent and much loved by the laity. I, who pen these notices, believe that his soul is now with the saints; and our beloved sister, Catherine de Ricci, is a witness of this. She was very intimate with him, and she let no month pass without writing to him with her own hand, and sending him messages and presents. On the Vigil of St. James, he accompanied the Friars who (according to ancient usage) go in procession to the Convent of S. Francis; but owing to the intense heat of the sun, he took his mortal illness and migrated from this life, after having lain for ten days. He was buried in our church, and in that part of it which is assigned for the sepulture of the young men, as he was only a Deacon. He was bewailed by his community and by all the citizens."

X.

Page 283.

Contract between the Superintendents of the Duomo of Pisa and Father Domenico Portigiani, in which the latter binds himself to cast (in bronze) the Three Gates of said Duomo (or Cathedral).

"April 22, 1597. The V. Rev. Fra D. Portigiani. *The Florentine* hereby binds himself to his Highness, and those deputed to superintend the restorations of the Duomo of Pisa, to cast in bronze the three gates destined for said church according to the design of the histories, etc., etc., already

furnished. In the central gate there shall be eight histories, according to the wax models now in possession of said Father, who will also execute the cornices, friezes and armorial devices, in baso-relievo. The histories shall be the following:—

The Nativity of the Madonna.
The Presentation of the same in the temple.
Her Espousals with S. Joseph.
The Annunciation.
The Visitation of S. Elizabeth.
The Purification in the Temple.
Her Assumption into heaven.
Her Coronation in heaven.

"The two other gates shall also contain eight histories with decorations, armorial devices, etc., etc.; the following are the subjects for the gate that is opposite the Campo Santo:—

Our Lord's Nativity.
His Circumcision.
The Adoration of the Magi.
The Disputation with the Doctors.
His Baptism by S. John.
The Expulsion of the Pharisees from the temple.
The Resurrection of Lazarus.
The Lord's triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

"The gate opposite the New Hospital shall contain the following:—

Our Lord praying in the garden.
The Flagellation.
The Crowning with Thorns.
Our Lord carrying His Cross and meeting His Mother.
The Crucifixion.
Our Lord Crucified between the two highwaymen.
Our Lord Expiring on the Cross.
The Burial of our Lord.

"F. Portigiani undertakes to substitute for the armorial devices which are in the centre of the model, Cherubims and Seraphims; and he promises to execute the devices under the architrave of said gates in the centre; he also binds himself to execute the histories of the three gates in baso-relievo.

"The wax models shall be furnished by the best masters, and they must be approved by Gian Bologna, Raffael da Pagno, the architect, or by some one appointed for that purpose.

"Said Father is bound to come with the gates to Pisa after they have been cast, and he shall assist while they are being set up. The expense consequent on all this is to be paid by the superintendents.

"Said superintendents are bound to provide F. Portigiani with all necessary accommodation for casting the gates in Florence. They are also bound to furnish all metal that shall be required, indemnifying him at the rate of ten per cent. for *waste*, as soon as said gates shall have been furnished.

"Said gates shall be well executed and polished; and in case any question should arise, the whole matter shall be referred to Gian Bologna and Raffael Pagno, the architect.

"For the workmanship of said gates the superintendents shall be bound to pay F. Portigiani 2,200 dollars; and for the next six months they shall be bound to pay him five ducats per month. After the expiration of this term, they shall pay him in proportion to the work that he executes each day. As soon as the three gates are perfected, they shall liquidate whatever claims said Father may have on them. Father Portigiani undertakes to deliver said gates to the superintendents within the term of two years, the first of which is to commence in the May of the present year.

"Father Portigiani and Zanobi de Girolamo, his nephew, pledge themselves to the observance of all these stipulations, and the superintendents of the Duomo of Pisa, by virtue of the powers entrusted to them by his Highness, bind themselves to said Father, and promise to carry out all that they have herein promised. For the maintenance of all these stipulations, they give as security the said Duomo of Pisa; but they are not to be bound in their own personal property.

"I, Fra D. Portigiani, bind myself to the observance of all that is herein contained, and hereunto I append my signature.

"I, Zanobi Portigiani, pledge myself to same arrangements, and subscribe my signature."

XI.

Page 284.

NECROLOGY OF FATHER DOMENICO PORTIGIANI.

Annals of the convent of S. Marco.

"Father D. Portigiani, a son of this convent, and a priest of God, was remarkable for his piety and gravity. Though not distinguished in literature he was gifted with great prudence, and such was his saintly character, that he was chosen to be Master of Novices in our convent. He was also appointed confessor to the nuns of the Dominican Order. He for some time was Sub-Prior of this convent. While he was a secular, he learned the art of casting in bronze from his father, and after taking the habit, he devoted many hours to the study of Vitruvius and Leon Battista Alberti. Indeed he

took the greatest delight in such studies, and ultimately became one of the most distinguished cultivators of this art as well as of architecture whom our age has seen. His Highness, our Duke, would have sent him to Prester John, (the King of Ethiopia) in order to teach his subjects the art of casting in bronze, had our good Father consented to the proposal.

"Father Portigiani was highly distinguished as an architect, and he restored many edifices that were in a ruinous condition, and rebuilt many others. He cast a great number of *cannons*, bells, and various adornments for edifices, fountains and aquaducts. He also cast the beautiful basso-relievo (in bronze) which may be seen in the chapel of S. Antonino in the church of S. Marco. Let us not forget the three beautiful gates which, together with their sills and imposts, he cast for the cathedral of Pisa. He did not live to perfect them, but he left a disciple who executed all our good Father desired, and inscribed his (Portigiani's) name thereon. Attending sedulously to this work, and being constantly about the furnace, (for he took little care of himself,) he was seized with a violent malady which very soon consigned him to his grave. Having devoutly received all the sacraments, he died in the 65th year of his age, Feb. 5th, 1601. He lived 50 years in Religion, and is buried in our church."

THE END.

J. M. O'Toole, Printer, 13, Hawkins'-street, Dublin.

922.2 4821
M16
v.2 Lives of the most
eminent painters,
sculptors ... /
Fr. O.P. Marchese

922.2 4821
M16
v.2 Lives of the most
eminent painters,
sculptors ... /
Fr. O.P. Marchese

Flora Lamson Hewlett Library
Graduate Theological Union
2400 Ridge Road
Berkeley, CA 94709

DEMCO